

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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{ From Beginning
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MY BIRTHDAY.

Who is this who gently slips
Through my door, and stands and sighs,
Hovering in a soft eclipse,
With a finger on her lips
And a meaning in her eyes?

Once she came to visit me
In white robes with festal airs,
Glad surprises, songs of glee;
Now in silence cometh she,
And a sombre guard she wears.

Once I waited and was tired,
Chid her visits as too few;
Crownless now and undesired,
She to seek me is inspired
Often than she used to do.

Grave her coming is and still,
Sober her appealing mien,
Tender thoughts her glances fill;
But I shudder, as one will
When an open grave is seen.

Wherefore, friend, for friend thou art,
Should I wrong thee thus and grieve?
Wherefore push thee from my heart?
Of my morning thou wert part;
Be a part too of my eve.

See, I hold my hand to meet
That cool, shadowy hand of thine;
Hold it firmly, it is sweet
Thus to clasp, and thus to greet,
Though no more in full sunshine.

Come and freely seek my door,
I will open willingly;
I will chide the past no more,
Looking to the things before,
Led by pathways known to thee.

Transcript.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

LITERATURE VERSUS SCIENCE.

"Literature—that is a very high flight. Science—that is a higher flight still."—MR. GLADSTONE at the *Hawarden Literary Institute*.

YOUR pardon, dear Gladstone. We seldom dispute.

Are you rightly reported? *Punch* cannot be mute.

As a recognized leader and lover of letters,
He will not admit the professors his betters,
Or let Archimedes fly higher than Homer,
Through whose infinite realm you're a fortunate roamer.

Our Newton reached science's summit, we know,
But on poetry's peak was great Shakespeare below?

Imagine the wrathful discussion 'twould kindle
If we had to decide 'twixt the laureate and Tyndall!

Punch, proctor of letters, designs no defiance
To the absolute definite value of science;
But he holds that by logic 'tis clearly deducible
That the pen beats retort and alembic and crucible,
Beats compass, theodolite, sewing-machine,
Creates or suggests them, and tells what they mean.

It gives us the easiest record of thought,
And without its strong aid all our science were nought.

September's long lights cross the lawn and the garden,
You, statesman retired, enjoy autumn at Ha'arden;

Punch hopes, when you've felled the due number of trees,
On the turf by the castle there, sitting at ease,
You'll just reconsider that saying of yours—
Since you're one whose terse apophthegm always endures.

The different grooves which are occupied scan:

See, science takes nature, but letters take man—

Take woman as well, a most exquisite field!
Think over that matter, dear Gladstone, and yield.

The binomial theorem's something to strike;
it

Was clever, no doubt—I prefer "As You Like It."

Archimedes was dencedly wise on the cone,
Aristophanes' "Birds" suit me better, I own:
And though science must have her keen surgeons with lancets,

Her astronomers sage to watch Venus's transits

(From boudoir to drawing-room, doubtless, and back again),

Yet as long as life lasts men will tread the old track again,

Will follow the pen, that can wing them afar
To regions beyond the least visible star,

Will smile just awhile at the science experiment,

Then welcome pure poetry's music, depth, merriment.

Since school-boards have come a great change there must be,

And even ex-premiers have learnt rule of three:

So, as letters to science is dinner to lunch—
Thus verily sayeth

Yours verily,
PUNCH.

From The Edinburgh Review.
THE PHYSIOLOGICAL INFLUENCE OF
ALCOHOL.

A FEW months since a memorandum appeared in the public journals signed by 266 distinguished physicians and surgeons engaged in hospital practice in Great Britain, in which an earnest appeal was made to the medical profession at large to be careful, when using alcohol as a remedial agent, so to employ it as not to give ground that can afterwards be construed into a sanction for its excessive, or even for its habitual, dietetic use. In this memorandum there appeared an altogether unqualified expression of the opinion that the value of alcohol as an article of diet is immensely exaggerated, and that medical practitioners are bound, in the face of the greivous evil that results from its indiscriminate and injudicious use, to inculcate very strenuously habits of the utmost moderation. Shortly afterwards a letter was printed, also in the public journals, addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, by Sir Henry Thompson, the well-known surgeon of University College Hospital, in which he states his own assured conviction that there is no greater cause of moral and physical evil in this country than the habitual use of alcoholic beverages, even when restricted to an amount which falls far short of the quantity required to produce drunkenness, and that is conventionally held to be quite within the limits of strict moderation. Sir Henry further adds that such habitual use injures the body, and diminishes the mental power, to an extent that few people are aware of; and that it is, in reality, the determining cause of a very large proportion of the most dangerous and painful maladies that come under the care of the surgeon, and also of much of the deterioration of the qualities of the race that capacitate men for endurance in the compe-

tion which must exist in the nature of things, and in which the prize of superiority falls to the best and the strongest.

In the face of this public, and deliberately preferred, indictment it becomes a matter of some importance, as well as interest, to inquire a little further into the ground upon which so grave an allegation rests; and it is all the more easy to do this, because in recent years numerous well-qualified observers have been powerfully attracted by this branch of physiological investigation, and have been devoting to it the closest and the most unwearrying attention. The culprit who is arraigned at the bar of public opinion by this indictment of the physiologists, was not known in his naked and undisguised deformity until he was extracted as a flame-spirit from the alembics of the Arabian alchemists of the eleventh century during their persistent search for the elixir of life, and for the philosopher's stone. He had nevertheless existed, and was a mighty power in the world, for long centuries before that. Alcohol is not created by the artificial manipulation of the grape now used in the manufacture of wine, but grows in it during the natural process of ripening, and of subsequent decay. All the earliest wines were simply the expressed juice of the ripened grape left to its own inherent tendencies. The ferment which generated the wine was as much an integral part of the ripened fruit as its sweetness and its fragrance. It was measured out and apportioned by nature itself to each berry, and deposited in it in the exact quantity which was required in the further work of transforming the sugar of the matured fruit into spirit. Wine in the sense of a fermented intoxicating beverage, was well known alike to the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. The Roman wines are well known from the frequent allusions made to them by the Latin poets; and even the dialogues of Plato record the vinous excesses of Athenian philosophers; but spirit extracted from the juice of the grape, or from other vegetable substances, by distillation, does not appear to have been known at all to antiquity.

It was at one time conceived that there

* 1. *Alcohol, its Action and its Uses: Cantor Lectures of the Society of Arts.* By BENJAMIN W. RICHARDSON, M.D., F.R.S., F.R.C.P. "Journal of the Society of Arts," Vol. XXIII. London: 1875.

2. *A Treatise on the Origin, Nature, and Varieties of Wine.* By J. L. W. THUDICHUM, M.D., and AUGUST DUFRE, Ph. D. London: 1872.

3. *Stimulants and Narcotics, and their Mutual Relations.* By FRANCIS E. ANSTIE, M.D., M.R.C.P. London: 1864.

was only one kind of wine-producing grape, the species known to botanists as the *Vitis vinifera*. This, however, is by no means the true state of the case. Each wine-producing district of the world seems to have its own particular series of indigenous vines, which have improved under the natural circumstances of soil and climate, and under the ordinary process of selection, into the perfected vines of the same district at the present day. Drs. Thudichum and Dupré remark that the grape of each district is so changed when it is transplanted to other localities that its distinctive character is entirely lost, and very commonly its wine-producing power is effectually destroyed, although the climate of its new home differs in no material degree from that of the place from which it has been removed. The Catawba wine of the Arkansas Valley, in North America, is the production, not of any species of European vine, but of the indigenous American fox-grape, or *Vitis labrusca*. In this district Mr. Longworth, the principal grower of the Catawba, planted numerous varieties of vine brought from France and from Madeira, but notwithstanding the care and skill which his large experience and intimate knowledge of the vine enabled him to give them, they all failed. The indigenous Catawba grape, on the other hand, is entirely successful, and the manufacture of wine from it is yearly extending. Drs. Thudichum and Dupré furnish a description of twenty-nine distinct species of wild vine which are indigenous in the valley of the Rhine.

By very much the larger part of the juice of the fully ripened grape is nature's own arch solvent, pure water; but this water contains mingled with it a certain proportion of other principles that have been elaborated in the grape during the life of the plant, and are held dissolved in the water to communicate to it its sweetness and other delicious qualities. Of these principles the chief part is sugar mingled with a relatively small percentage of tartaric acid, and with a yet more minute trace of various other more or less organized and complex substances that are mixed cunningly together by the vegetable alchemy, to give the various charming attri-

butes of colour, flavour, and fragrance to the fruit. In the most essential products of this vital elaboration the acid is preponderant during the early stage of the formation of the berry: but with the advance of maturation the sugar accumulates more and more, and the acid falls back into obscurity, for the most part on account of being overborne and masked by the increase of the saccharine ingredient, but in some instances also, it appears, from the actual conversion of the tartaric acid into sugar.

The sugar produced in the ripening of the grape is mainly of a peculiar kind spoken of as "glucose," or "grape-sugar," which is characterized by its proneness to undergo the chemical change that constitutes fermentation. It is chemically distinguished from the sugar of the cane by being a trifle more rich in hydrogen and oxygen, and, therefore, somewhat less highly carbonized. Grape-sugar is capable of presenting itself in two distinct forms mainly distinguished by the odd peculiarity that one has the power of diverting the plane of a ray of polarized light passing through it towards the right, and the other of diverting the same ray towards the left.

When the grape-sugar has been matured by the oxygenation and rearrangement of the atoms of the saccharine molecule, and the rich juice, or expressed must, has been poured into vats, and left for a time in a moderately warm temperature to its own uncontrolled impulses, a further change begins among the highly balanced atoms of the sugar molecules. A further removal of carbon takes place, and a new form of molecule is formed out of the elements that remain. That new molecule is alcohol, or spirit of wine, instead of sugar. The sweetness is gone from it, and an ardent flavour has taken its place. The exact chemical character of the new and most remarkable agent which has been generated by this piece of molecular legerdemain may perhaps be better understood if the resulting spirit is described as a liquid in some sense of the nature of water, but in which a portion of the hydrogen of the water-molecule has been withdrawn, and its place supplied by a more complex hydro-carbon molecule.

The water becomes "fire-water," in consequence of the chemical condensation into itself of a hydro-carbon, a very energetic form of combustible substance.

In order that grape-juice may be successfully converted into wine of good quality by the natural process of fermentation it is found that it must not have, in its ripened state, more than five parts in each one thousand of tartaric acid, and that it must have two hundred parts in each one thousand, or twenty per cent., of sugar. In dry warm years this proportion is readily and commonly secured; but in less genial seasons the ripening is less perfect, and the grape-juice contains more acid and less sugar. The wine that is then made from the must is of very inferior and unsatisfactory quality. The first attempt to rectify this evil consisted in the removal by chemical means of the superfluous portion of acid, and of the addition of what was conceived to be the deficient amount of grape-sugar derived from other sources. This expedient, however, did not answer, and a better process was afterwards secured by diluting the must until the acid was lowered to the requisite amount, and then adding *cane-sugar* until due sweetness was secured. By this process very excellent wines are now made in the less favourable seasons.

When the must of the grape contains the appropriate twenty per cent. of sugar the result of the fermentation is a wine which has at the most some eleven per cent. of absolute alcohol, or nineteen per cent., by volume, of proof spirit. This is as high a proportion of alcohol as can be produced by the natural fermentation of the grape-juice, and, therefore, it becomes the standard of the highest strength of natural wines. All alcohol contained in wines beyond this proportion must have been produced by distillation as spirit, and have then been added to the wine in that state. The reason for this is that in presence of fourteen or fifteen per cent. of alcohol all further conversion of sugar into alcohol by fermentation is arrested. If a rich juice containing more than twenty per cent. of sugar is fermented there always remains a considerable amount of

unconverted sweetness in the wine after the fermentation has been carried as far as it can, and this remainder is protected from further change by the presence of the spirit. The natural wines which have a strength of eleven or twelve per cent. of absolute alcohol rarely retain more than half a per cent. of unconverted sugar.

There is some difference of opinion among experienced authorities as to the precise condition in which spirit exists in wine. In the natural wines the spirit is so intimately mingled with the other ingredients of the liquid that it is not detected by the taste as a distinct burning spirit; but in the fortified wines its ardent flavour is immediately perceived by the palate. It is said that some tasters can directly distinguish the presence of free spirit that has been added as such to the natural wine by the quality of the wine on the tongue. For these reasons it was at one time held that there is no free alcohol in wine, and that it exists in it in the form of some secondary combination, which is so broken up in the act of distillation that the spirit is then set free. It is now ascertained, however, that this view is erroneous. Spirit has been distilled off from wine, and then again added to the lees from which it had been removed, and the wine thus reconstituted was found to be in all essential qualities undistinguishable from the original wine. The fact seems simply to be that by the act of ordinary distillation the spirit is made more pungent, and more appreciable to the taste in consequence of the attachment to it of products which are generated out of the complex principles in the wine by the influence of heat, and which are tenaciously held by strong spirit when they are once brought into communication with it. Alcohol, when freed from these extraneous matters by elaborate care, proves to be as devoid of the ardent-spirit taste as natural wine itself.

Dr. Richardson, in the course of his Cantor Lectures delivered at the Society of Arts in the beginning of the present year, drew attention to an interesting list of the wines in use during the last century, which was prepared by the chemist Neumann, a careful and competent ana-

lyst, and in which there is a statement of the strength of many of the wines. From these analyses it appears to be unquestionable that the wines at that time in use were of very much lower alcoholic strength than those now most commonly consumed. The Burgundy of that time seems to have had only about two ounces of rectified spirit in two pints of the wine, corresponding to about five per cent. of alcohol, and therefore falling in strength very much below the stronger beers of the present day. The sherry or sack contained not more than three ounces of spirit in two pints of wine, which would correspond with 7.1-2 per cent. of alcohol. Only three wines quoted, namely palm-wine, alicant, and malmsey, were of greater strength. The strongest of the three had one fourth more alcohol in it than the sherry. This unquestionably seems to indicate that there has been a remarkable growth in the strength of wines that are in common use since the introduction of the employment of the still for the distillation of ardent spirit. The preparation of alcohol by distillation from wine was first practised by the Arabian alchemists in the eleventh century, but the spirituous product of their distillation was applied exclusively to further alchemical processes, and for the elaboration of menstrua. Distilled spirit was not employed as an ardent and intoxicating drink until some centuries after this time. "Gin" was not known as a word in civilized languages until about two centuries ago; whiskey, the modern analogue of the somewhat older "usquebaugh," is first mentioned in books about a century and a half ago; and brandy, or "brantwein," is a name of equally modern introduction. The old alchemists regarded alcohol as a veritable fire-water—a compound of water and fire—because they observed in some of their early experiments that this sublimed spirit of wine could be readily set fire to, and that the vapour of water was then caught in a cup inverted over the flame.

When the alcohol which has been generated in wine by the fermentation of grape-juice is left to finish its career in a natural and uncontrolled way, it very soon undergoes a still further change, and ceases to be alcohol. It absorbs fresh quantities of oxygen from the surrounding air, and splits up its molecules to rearrange their atoms with this addition. In this way it forms first "aldehyd" (or dehydrated alcohol), and then finally active acid or vinegar. This is always the final end of the processes of change when grape-juice

is left freely exposed to its uncontrolled destiny. The sugar is degraded and resolved, first into spirit, and then into vinegar. In the case of wine, artificially produced as a beverage, this process of degradation and decay is arrested midway as soon as the full complement of spirit has been made out of the sugar, by the simple expedient of bottling the liquor up, and so shutting it away from the air, which has to furnish oxygen for the completion of the change. We bottle our wines simply that the air may not convert their spirit into vinegar.

Spirit of wine, when refined by the chemist at the present day into the strongest and purest state into which it can be converted by art, is a clear, colourless, volatile liquid, which mingles greedily with water in any proportions, and will even take water away from moist substances to satisfy this greed. In its purest and strongest state it is distinguished as "absolute alcohol." What is called "proof spirit," or "rectified spirit of wine," consists of absolute alcohol and water mingled together in nearly equal quantities; in exact figures, at a temperature of 60° Fahrenheit, fifty-seven parts of spirit, and forty-three parts of water by volume.

When wine, or spirit diluted with water to some analogous degree of strength, is introduced into the human stomach, it gradually makes its way into the inner channels of the living frame, to mingle there intimately with the stream of the flowing blood. There is no other destination in the body to which it can be relegated. It passes into the blood by two distinct routes. First, by the veins of the interior lining of the stomach, which carry back from it the blood which has been contributing to its nutrition and support; but also by a series of innumerable delicate tubes which have been provided to collect the essence of the digested food from the alimentary canal. When it has been introduced into the inner recesses of the living body through these routes it is conveyed forthwith to the heart, and from the heart it is pumped forth with each stroke to all the textures of the living frame. The entire body, in all its parts, and in all its structures, is built upon a framework of delicate tubes, which are branchings-out from the main vessel that issues from the heart. There is in the Royal College of Physicians a preparation which was made by Dr. Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, in which the entire substance and form of the human body are presented, modelled

out by this framework of vessels made stiff and enduring by the injection of molten wax from the heart, and with all other associated structures cleared away in order that the vascular mould may be seen. Now in the condition of life with each stroke of the heart the blood is flushed through the intricate channels of these intermeshing tubes. At each stroke of the heart about three ounces of blood are thrown forward from its cavity into the channels of the circulation, and as the heart beats in a man of average size and vitality about seventy times every minute, all the blood which the body contains is injected through the extreme branchings of the vessels in from one to two minutes of time; and this goes on unceasingly from hour to hour; the entire mass of the blood being thus chased each minute through the frame, and returning back to the heart to be re-issued from it on this never-ending journey. If, therefore, any extraneous liquid substance, like wine or alcohol, is introduced into the blood, it goes everywhere in each fibre, membrane, and texture, and fills and saturates each vital organ — flesh, brain, heart, liver, lung, kidney, skin, and secreting apparatus. Wherever there should be blood under the natural arrangements of life, there is now blood mingled with the spirit. When a spirituous drink is taken into the body it does not simply run through the digestive cavity of that body, but it *runs through the blood* before it can find any escape, and it clings to that blood for a considerable period, flowing with it round and round through the circling stream of its unceasing progress. The question, therefore, very naturally arises, what are the immediate results of this mingling of spirit with the life-sustaining blood, as regards its influence on the well-balanced economy? Does it, in any way, help the vital actions of the frame? is it merely a foreign element playing the part of a useless and intrusive presence? or, yet again, is it a positively noxious agent working fell mischief in the delicately organized system?

When alcohol is introduced into the blood in a diluted state, and in a moderate quantity, its primary and most immediate influence is exerted upon those blood-vessels, and upon that heart, with which it is first placed in contact. The stroke of the heart is made more frequent, and the frequency is in proportion to the quantity of the alcohol that is brought into play. This primary influence of spirituous drink has been carefully examined and settled by Dr. Parkes. He instituted

a series of experiments with military recruits at Netley, and he found that with men whose hearts beat 106,000 times in twenty-four hours so long as they drank water only, the number of beats was increased by 25,488 when eight ounces of alcohol was given in the drink within the twenty-four hours. The experiments occupied fourteen days, and the conclusion arrived at by Dr. Parkes was that on the last two days of the experiment the heart was performing one-fifth more work than it did at the time when no spirituous beverage was consumed. Taking the apparently well-substantiated estimate of one hundred and twenty-two tons lifted one foot high as the mechanical expression of the task accomplished by the muscular contractions of the heart when water only was used, the extra labour performed by it on the last two days of the spirit-drinking, according to the views of this experimenter, amounted to the lifting of twenty-four tons additional one foot high each day.

Physiologists are pretty well agreed how it is that this quickened action of the heart is brought about through the agency of alcohol. An influence is exerted by the alcoholized blood upon the delicate nerve-fibres, supplied to the minute bloodvessels that are scattered through all vital organs to control and regulate their dimensions, which is very much of the nature of a paralysis of their power. The capillary arterioles which form the ultimate ramifications of the bloodvessels are allowed to remain relaxed and dilated on account of this suspension of nerve-control, the column of blood then yields more readily to the stroke of the heart, and in consequence of this the stroke is repeated more quickly. Dr. Parkes seems to have satisfied himself, by some special experiments addressed to the facts of this quickened action, that it really means additional effort accomplished by the muscular fibres of the heart; and Dr. Richardson endorses entirely this view. But it may be doubted whether, if the quickened action of the heart be due to the weakened and enlarged condition of the terminal arterioles, as is here explained, this does not rather imply that the heart accomplishes more frequent strokes without having to make more muscular effort, very much as a locomotive runs along with more frequent strokes of the piston when it passes from a rising gradient into a level track of rails. The effort is not greater, but the resistance to be overcome is less. It is, of course, quite possible that a part of the result may

be due to diminished resistance in the small vessels, and a part to increased vigour of stroke in the heart; and there are some considerations that seem to indicate that this is really the case. In the meantime the increased frequency of the heart's stroke when the living system is under the influence of alcohol may be taken as fairly proved, and it is in the highest measure probable that this increased frequency entails, in some greater or less degree, increased labour and wear and tear, and diminished rest, of the vital organ.

The next question that arises is scarcely of less importance in a physiological point of view. Does the augmented rapidity of the flow of the blood brought about by the action of alcohol carry with it the same increased warmth of the body that quickened circulation from muscular exercise does? It is the popular impression that the warmth of the living body is promoted by the use of wine or spirituous drink, and this impression is very naturally and reasonably suggested by the feeling of glow which follows almost directly upon the use of such beverages. The general impression is also strengthened by the well-known fact that the self-same spirit does burn out of the body when it is set on fire, with the production of a very considerable amount of heat. The verdict of many physiologists who have submitted this question to the test of elaborate and carefully executed experiments is, however, not in accordance with the popular impression. It is found by them that the living body, as a whole, is actually made colder by the influence of the spirit, and that the degree of its coldness is in the ratio of the amount of the spirit that has been used. The degree of cooling is inappreciable, and perhaps may be even questioned, in the case of really moderate employment of spirit, but it is unquestionable when the spirit is used in large quantity. The natural combustion of the body then appears to be lowered, instead of being raised, by its presence; and it may be so lowered under the circumstance of an overpowering quantity of spirit as to have the vitality of its organs destroyed by the severity of the cold. In some remarkable investigations made by Dr. Richardson, two animals were placed in a small chamber kept ten degrees colder than freezing water, one animal being in a natural sleep, and the other being in a sleep induced by the narcotic influence of alcohol. The animals were withdrawn from the cold after a considerable length of exposure, and the one which had been under the influence of the

spirit died, whilst the other recovered without suffering any harm. Dr. Richardson holds that the insensibility of apoplexy may be at once distinguished from the insensibility of drunkenness by the temperature of the body. Its heat is lowered from the natural standard in the sleep of drunkenness, but raised above that standard in the coma of apoplexy.

These conclusions as to the chilling of the body by spirituous drink are remarkably confirmed by another form of evidence. When spirit is burned as a flame with the production of a large amount of heat, streams of carbonic acid gas, generated by the union of the carbon of the burning alcohol with the oxygen of the air, are poured forth from the flame. This is the same kind of carbonic acid which is poured forth from the lungs in the process of breathing, and which is a production of the slow combustion of the carbonaceous substance of the body. Now Dr. Edward Smith proved, by some careful experiments which he instituted, that when spirituous drinks are used, the carbonic acid gas exhaled from the lungs is less than the ordinary amount, instead of being more. The alcohol appears to take to itself some of the oxygen which ought to be employed in the natural combustion and in the natural support of the warmth of the body, and to apply it in some quite different way which does not generate carbonic acid. Persons who have been actually intoxicated by alcohol to the extent of losing all consciousness and self-control, remain cold even for days, before the natural standard of temperature is restored. It will be here understood that the results of Dr. Smith's experiments are not necessarily touched by the familiar fact that a *sensation* supposed to be that of warmth is produced by the employment of wine or spirituous beverage. That sensation may be called up by some other influence as well as by warmth. It may primarily be but a nervous impression made by the stimulant drink upon the susceptible living membranes with which it comes into immediate contact. But it has also, on the other hand, to be borne in mind that it may possibly be in some degree due to the quickened flow of blood through the minute channels of the sensitive structure. It is quite within the bounds of reasonable probability that this quickened circulation of the blood may in the first instance stimulate the combusive consumption of the other principles of the blood with which the alcohol is beginning to be mingled, and that in this way warmth

is caused for a time by the alcohol, even although it is not generated by its own combustion. This primary action is, however, then soon overmastered by further and fuller alcoholic contamination of the circulating liquid. At a first glance it appears that this question of increase or diminution of temperature in the living body is one which ought to be very easily set at rest by the employment of the thermometer. This, however, is unfortunately not the case. It is by no means certain that the thermometer is competent to furnish this indication in every instance, and in all circumstances it requires considerable skill in the handling where qualifying influences may be at work, and where complicated conditions have to be dealt with. In consequence of this, and of the attention which has been drawn to certain practical bearings of this part of the subject by the Cantor Lectures, some of the medical officers of the police force have undertaken to use the opportunity which their position unfortunately affords for this class of observation, and to extend the investigation into the alleged depression of temperature caused by intoxication.

A further consideration that occurs, in natural course, in the progress of this inquiry is whether alcohol does, or does not, nourish the body. Is it, or is it not, food in any acceptation of the term? The indirect and mere inferential aspect of this part of the question has disposed many physiologists to hold by anticipation that it cannot be a food. All other foods that are known are complex bodies built up from simpler elements by the effort of vegetable life; and when they are constructed in this way the forces which are afterwards extracted from them for the service of the animal body are worked in with the constituent elements, and left there in an absorbed and latent state, preserving by their influence the precise composition of substance that has been brought about, but ready to be set free for other employment whenever the complex organization is again dissolved, and restored to its primary elements. Now alcohol is not a complex principle built up by the effort of vegetable life, but it is a product of the downward degradation and decay of such a complex principle. It is a result of the first stage of decomposition of sugar. From this point of view therefore it is anticipated by these theorists that alcohol can no more nourish the animal body than vinegar or carbonic acid can do so.

Foods in the animal body have been practically divided into two great classes—those which furnish substance to the organs or living parts of the structure, and those which supply heat or force in some other form. The constructive foods are for the most part composed with the aid of nitrogen, and are of great complexity; while the heat or force-producing foods are as commonly mere simple hydrocarbons capable of being burned by the agency of oxygen. The nitrogenized principles are all moulded in the animal body into a soft, jelly-like, or, as it is technically termed, *colloidal* condition. The fibrin of the blood, the muscular flesh, the cartilages and tendons, the membranes and the skin, the soft nerve-pulp and the brain, are all so many examples of nitrogenized matter. All the really active and essentially vital parts of the organization are of this kind, and the principal contributor to their activity is their moisture. The water which they contain favours the ready and continuous changes of composition that tend to the liberation of the force which is expressed as animal activity. The various saline ingredients, such as potash, soda, salt, and lime, which are mingled with the soft substance, merely confer upon it its particular physical character, and fit it for its especial work as it is adapted to various offices.

But alcohol is entirely devoid of nitrogen in any form. It cannot, therefore, be itself converted by any direct transformation into the substance of the living body as fibrin and albumen are. If it contributes in any degree to the construction of living structures it must do so by the altogether exceptional and abnormal plan of borrowing from extraneous sources the nitrogen which would be needed to be worked up with its own hydrogen and carbon.

Dr. Richardson, in his Cantor Lectures, affirms that pure alcohol is entirely without nourishing power. There is, of course, even with him, no question as to the fact that some forms of fermented beverages which have their spirit mingled with other ingredients of a glutinous and sugary character, as in the case of beer, do nourish to a considerable degree. But Dr. Richardson roundly asserts that this is due to the other ingredients which are mingled with the spirit, and that if all the spirit were taken away from them their nourishing powers would remain the same, and possibly be increased rather than diminished by its abstraction. There are, on the other hand some facts which have been noted by other high authorities which it does not seem

possible to reconcile altogether with this view. Dr. Anstie, for instance, has recorded one very notable case—that, namely, of an old soldier who was under his care at the Westminster Hospital in 1861, who had lived for twenty years upon a diet composed of a bottle of unsweetened gin and “one small finger-length of toasted bread” per day, and who maintained the structures of his body for this long period upon that very remarkable regimen. The instances are also very numerous in which patients suffering from acute and febrile diseases have been supported through critical periods of the disorder by the bold administration of spirit and wine. Dr. Anstie refers to one very instructive case of this character which was also under his care in 1861, and which obviously left a great impression on his mind. A young man, only eighteen years of age, was so reduced by a severe attack of acute rheumatism that he was unable to retain food of any kind upon his stomach. He was consequently sustained for several days upon an allowance of twelve ounces of water and twelve ounces of gin per day. His recovery under this treatment was very rapid and complete, and almost without any trace of the emaciation and wasting that ordinarily follow upon such a disease. The lad previous to this illness was of a strictly sober and temperate habit, and during the use of the gin the abnormal frequency of the pulse, and of the breathing, came gradually down to the proper standard of ordinary health, and there never was at any time the slightest tendency to intoxication. These cases are of marked force on account of their exceptional character, but they are in entire accordance with the well-established power of brandy and wine to sustain the life of sinking men in the critical periods of exhausting fevers. Various well-attested instances of this character certainly afford ground for the familiar and popular impression that there is support in wine and spirituous drink. Dr. Anstie's conclusion from such evidence, and from a very large hospital experience, was that beyond all possibility of doubt pure alcohol, with the addition of only a small quantity of water, will prolong life greatly beyond the period at which it would cease if no nourishment was given; that during the progress of acute diseases it very commonly supports not only life, but also the bulk of the body, during many days of abstinence from common foods; and that although the physician and physiologist fail to explain chemically how it is that the result is brought about, it may

nevertheless be safely affirmed that the influence exerted over the body by alcohol is, essentially, of a food-character.

It seems to be perfectly manifest that when alcohol is judiciously administered as a medicine, for a limited period, even in large doses, no evil effect of any kind remains on the restoration of health, and it is perhaps equally clear that when it is used as an habitual beverage with very great moderation no injurious effect follows. Dr. Richardson, from some expressions in his lectures, seems inclined to mark from an ounce and a half to two ounces of alcohol per day as the quantity which begins to exert a distinct physiological influence upon the living textures, and which should therefore be regarded as the limit of safety; and he further expresses his own belief that although persons of average strength and health may considerably exceed this quantity, taking even five or six ounces of alcohol per day, without suffering any permanent damage up to the thirtieth year of age, this merely indicates the marvellous recuperative power of the animal economy in its early years when the vital forces are at their freshest and best, and not as expressing the innocuous character of the agent.

Before passing on from the consideration of the influence of alcohol when used, in whatever form, as an ordinary beverage, it may be well here to look a little more closely at the evidence that has been obtained as to what becomes of the spirit after it has been introduced into the blood. If it is not burned away into vapour with the production of increased heat in the body, and if it is not used in building up the textures of the living frame through the ordinary process of nourishment, where does it get to, and what is ultimately done with it in the system? It clearly cannot remain accumulating in the blood when it is continually taken in even moderate quantity, or intoxication would assuredly be at last produced. The great law of the living economy is that all bodies of a foreign and unnecessary character which are introduced into the blood are gradually expelled from it again by the merely natural action of the system. They are got rid of through sundry outlets which have been provided in the body for this very purpose. They escape through the pores and orifices of the lungs, of the skin, of the kidneys, of the liver, and of the alimentary canal. One of the most important reasons for the beneficent action of the remedies of the physician is due to this very law. The medicines which are

administered as remedies are taken into the blood, and being foreign and unnatural bodies they are immediately afterwards removed by exciting the expelling actions of the secreting apparatus, and as they are expelled they carry away with them some other injurious principles that have been generated in the body by default or perversion of its own subtle chemistry, and out of its own decomposing substance. This unquestionably at the bottom is the reason why alcohol can be habitually taken to the extent which it often is without grave disturbance of the proper functions of life. It is got rid of from the blood, and exhaled out of the body, almost as rapidly as it is taken into the stomach. Even when it is used to the extent of producing the actual insensibility of extreme drunkenness, the whole of the spirit is expelled from the blood within a few hours. Now, after wine, or any fermented drink, has been taken for some little time the presence of the escaping alcohol can readily be detected in the vapours of the breath, in the perspiration, and in the secretions of the kidney and liver; and accordingly a notion has sprung up in a certain school of physiologists, which has been very ably represented in France, that all the alcohol which is at any time taken into the living body is again removed through the secretions as unchanged alcohol. This view was especially advocated by the eminent French physiologists Lallemand, Perrin, and Duroy. The statement of these experimentalists was to the effect that the alcohol which is taken into the living body accumulates in the organs and tissues, and especially in the substance of the liver and brain, and that it is then slowly, but in the end entirely eliminated, still as alcohol, with the fluid secretions, and more especially with the renal secretion.

This notion, however, was not from the first accepted with favour by our own physiologists, and a further investigation of a very elaborate and careful character was entered upon by Dr. Anstie, and by Drs. Thudichum and Dupré, by which it was finally and satisfactorily proved that only a very small proportion of the spirit which is taken into a living body is expelled out of that body as alcohol in the secretions, and that there must be some other means by which the spirit is disposed of in the system. Dr. Dupré in the course of these investigations discovered also that alcohol is found in small quantity in the excretions even of persons who do not touch fermented beverage in any form; that the

healthy system of the teetotaler "brews," so to speak, "a little drop for itself." On the other hand, in one very notable and memorable experiment Dr. Anstie gave a dog weighing ten pounds the liberal dose of two thousand grains of alcohol in ten days, and on the last day of the ten he administered ninety-five grains of the spirit as a final dose, and then two hours afterwards killed the dog and immediately subjected the whole body — blood, secretions, flesh, membranes, brain, and bone — to rigorous analysis, and he found in the whole texture of the body only 23.66 grains of spirit. The other 1,976 grains had obviously been turned into something else within the penetralia of the living frame.

These most interesting and instructive experiments and observations of Anstie's, Thudichum's, and Dupré's point to the exact turn in the investigation upon which the ultimate settlement of the food-power of alcohol, as a doctrine of physiological science, depends. There is no difficulty in conceiving that a further degradation of the complex organic principle, which has already been brought down from the state of sugar into that of alcohol by approximate oxidation, may go on with the living frame, and that the alcohol molecules may be broken up, first into the state of aldehyd, and then into that of acetic acid, which have already been described. But this, it will be observed, is a pure piece of scientific imagination until the presence of these compounds in proportions equivalent to the spirit which has been imbibed, is proved by experiments as exhaustive and complete as those of Dr. Anstie in his search for the alcohol itself. The alcohol is unquestionably transmuted into something else in the body, and it is quite as philosophical, in the face of the experience of the physician, to assume that that transformation may be the explanation of the strange facts which are encountered in that experience, as it is to assume that the products must be altogether refuse and waste because alcohol is already one step down in the process of decomposition and decay. It may thus be well for even advanced and accomplished physiologists to bear in mind that there may be "more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of" in their philosophy. There would at least be nothing more startling in the discovery that the physiological dogma, which affirms that the products of the reduction of complex organic substances cannot be employed as the food of animal life, had to be reconsidered, and in some particulars reversed, or revised,

than there has been in the recent reversal of the Liebig dogma that nitrogenized principles alone can be used for constructive purposes, and the simpler hydro-carbons alone for the production of animal warmth. In his able and philosophical treatise "On Stimulants and Narcotics," Dr. Anstie refers to this very bearing of the subject in a passage in which he argues that many substances which are ranked as even "poisonous" to the system must not be taken to be absolutely "foreign" to the organism except in a relative sense, when even such agents as mercury and arsenic, given in small doses for long periods, produce what is termed a tonic influence, improving the quality of the blood and the tissues, and do this in such a way that it is scarcely possible to maintain that they contract no organic combination. Various incidents of their operation seem to leave no other conclusion possible, but that they do establish some very close structural connection with the nutritious principles of the blood, and that in these states of impaired health these abnormal elements are entitled to rank as alimentary bodies, at least as much as salt is entitled so to rank in the ordinary circumstances of the economy. Dr. Anstie in allusion to this point very suggestively remarks, that although there is a large mass of evidence which appears to show that under the circumstances of ordinary health the nitrogen of the air takes no active part in the vital processes, it is nevertheless far from certain that the same is the case in all pathological conditions, and it is quite within the bounds of possibility that the administration of certain medicinal substances, and of alcohol among them, may effect important changes in the behaviour of the organism towards nitrogen.

Dr. Anstie again and again dwells on the notable fact that in all cases of disease where alcohol is used successfully as a medicinal support, as in the case of exhaustive fevers, its presence as an alcoholic emanation, whether in the breath or in other secretions, is absent altogether, as if in those cases the whole force of the agent was absorbed in its beneficent operation. He also insists that in such instances its exciting and intoxicating powers appear to be in abeyance, and that the recovery from acute disease where this medicine has been successfully employed is invariably more rapid and complete than it is in altogether similar cases which have been treated without alcohol. He also recurs continually to the well-known

fact that in many forms of disease alcohol calms pain, removes delirium, and induces natural sleep, exactly as concentrated nourishment of the nature of strong meat broth does under the same circumstances. In short, by his experience and investigations Dr. Anstie seems to have been led as uncompromisingly to the conviction that alcohol, in a certain sense, is a food, as Dr. Richardson has been led by his researches to the conclusion that it is not a food, either on the ground of constructive service or warming power. The inference is plain: the nutritious capability of alcohol, when used in appropriate circumstances and in reasonable quantity, is yet a matter of controversy, and a question that has to be further investigated and weighed by competent and scientific authorities, before any absolute judgment regarding it can be pronounced that is worthy of general acceptance.

When, however, the consideration of this important question is carried on from what may possibly be deemed the debatable ground of the investigation into the more tangible region that lies beyond, there is no longer any hesitating balance of opposing evidence to be adjusted. The intemperate and excessive use of alcoholic beverages is an unmitigated evil of the deepest dye, and no better service can possibly be rendered to a community of rational creatures, constituted as civilized society is by the luxurious habits of the time, than that which has been attempted in these Cantor Lectures of the present year.

When alcohol is introduced into the blood in somewhat considerable quantity it has to circulate, as has been already pointed out, with that blood through every constituent texture of the living organization, permeating everywhere the interstices and pores of the soft vital membranes, and in this way connecting itself most immediately and intimately with all the subtle business of life that is carried on by their agency. Now the structures which possess the most energetic vitality are those which are of the softest and most pulpy consistence, as, for instance, the nervous material of the spinal cord and the brain, and this pulpy consistence is efficiently ensured by the large proportion of water that is used in their composition. The nerves, the great ganglionic nerve-centres, and the brain are essentially composed of this soft and exquisitely delicate nerve-pulp packed carefully into minute filmy sacs and tubes of almost invisible membrane, inconceivably fine in

comparison with the thinnest membranous film produced by art, and then stowed with the most elaborate care into the mesh-work of minute arterioles that are appointed to carry the circling stream of the blood through every part of the exquisitely planned organization. It will be understood that these pulp-filled tubules and vesicles, and these capillary bloodvessels of the nerve-structures, are of a minuteness that requires very considerable powers of the microscope to render them even barely visible to the eye. The crimson blood which flows in never-ceasing streams through every part of this structure is so delicately divided and scattered that it is only seen in the white pulp as a faint shade of grey. The pulp itself is of so soft, and it may almost be said of so *melting* a character, that it is crushed and destroyed by any rude touch. As, then, the blood flushes on its ceaseless flow through this delicate substance, its crimson streams and the white almost liquid pulp are only separated from free intermingling by the all but evanescent films that form, on the one hand, the walls of the pulp-vesicles and tubules, and on the other hand the walls of the bloodvessels. An intercommunication, therefore, does take place between the pulp and the blood; but it is an intercommunication of to-and-fro infiltration through the separating films, instead of a direct and free admixture. This is the peculiar operation which is known in the technical language of the physiologists as dialysis. Dialysis simply means that more or less thick and complex liquids are so filtered off through membranes, that some of their elements or principles are passed through while others are retained, and that a change in their inherent composition is in that way brought about. By this vital dialysis selected portions of the blood pass into the nerve-pulp to renew and nourish its organization, and portions of the nerve-pulp pass back into the blood to be carried away in its onward stream because their work has been done, and because they require to be removed as waste refuse out of the way of the freshly arriving supplies of nourishment. The vital action and power of the nerve-organization are the direct result of this process of dialysis — of this filtering out and interchange of the blood and the nerve-pulp.

But this delicate nerve-pulp, of all the varieties of organization that are built up in the living frame, is the one that is most immediately sensible of the introduction into it, by means of the blood-streams, of

an extraneous and unusual ingredient, such as alcohol, for the reason that has already been given, namely, its extreme mobility, and the uncontrollable impulse this compound has to draw water into itself. When alcohol in sufficient quantity is injected with the blood-streams into the nerve-pulp, much of the water that is properly designed to maintain the moist and workable condition of the pulp is withdrawn from it to satisfy the ardent thirst of the exacting liquid, and the nerve-pulp is in consequence so hardened and dried that it is spoiled for its proper office. When alcohol goes in any considerable quantity into the substance of organs that have natural outlets, such as the lungs, the liver, and the kidneys, its exhalation and removal are immediately set about through these outlets. It is poured from them into the external spaces surrounding the body, either as vapour, or as liquid. In the nerve-pulp of the central ganglia and of the brain, there are, however, no such outlets. The alcohol is therefore shut in and imprisoned in the structure to a degree which cannot be brought about in the substance of organs that have outlets of escape. It can then only be removed from the nervous organs by the very gradual and slow onward flow of the bloodvessels taking back again what they have already given, when further extraneous supply is arrested. For two reasons, therefore, the nerve-centres and the nerve-organization are peculiarly obnoxious to deleterious and disturbing influence from alcohol; first, because they are in themselves of such a watery and mobile consistence that they are hardened and dried by its water-absorbing proclivities, and then because the escape from them of the unnatural and unusual agent is of necessity more difficult and impeded than is the escape from organs that are less elaborately shut in and cared for.

The first action upon the nerve-pulp — that, namely, which is produced when spirit has been administered in only a very moderate amount, and in very dilute form — is, no doubt, that upon which its remedial power depends. It is an influence which is by no means absolutely required in the vigorous and healthy frame; but it is also one which is capable of being turned to good account when there is impairment of vital power. This primary action is physically indicated by the pleasant sense of warmth and glow which characterizes the first influence, and accompanies the moderate and temperate use of fermented beverage. Dr. Anstie regards this state as an

illustration of what he terms pure "stimulation," and he holds that stimulation of this kind is an absolute "nourishment," although we may be unable to analyze the chemical conditions upon which the result depends, and that it is in no sense followed by depression or any other penalty levied upon the integrity of the vital processes. In speaking of this he points out that a man who drinks four or six ounces of brandy gradually does not get even upon the threshold of its narcotic action until some hours have passed away; and that if he had stopped in this drinking when, perhaps, two ounces of brandy, representing one ounce of alcohol, had been swallowed, no narcotic agency whatever would have been established, and no subsequent depression would have followed; but that when he adds a further dose of two ounces or four ounces of brandy, he impregnates his blood with a subtle principle that does act narcotically upon the nerve-texture, so as to render it incapable of performing its proper functions. This, in all probability, is the correct explanation of the well-known fact that when alcohol is successfully used, in whatever quantity, as a remedial agent, there is no quickening of the pulse, no trace of narcotism, and no vestige of intoxication of any kind. It is simply that the narcotic influence is not produced, and that the impaired natural function of the nerve-organization only is restored to its normal condition and standard.

When, however, the other two, or four, ounces of brandy, and perhaps something beyond that, are added, the next stage of alcoholic influence upon the nerve-pulp is entered upon; and this unquestionably is one which does change the character of the delicate organization so materially as to render it incapable of performing its usual and proper office. The flushed face, which is one of the earliest signs of the approach of inebriation, is immediately due to a change of this character produced in the fine filaments of the nerves of organic life, which have properly the control of the minute channels of the circulation, and which regulate their capacity. These nervous filaments are so affected that they cease to be able for the time to perform their restraining work, and the capillary vessels of the face being left uncontrolled and without supervision, enlarge and admit more copious blood-streams than it is altogether well for them to receive. Most other parts of the frame, and especially those which are exceptionally well supplied with blood, are at this stage in

identically the same flushed condition. Dr. Richardson speaks of one case in which he had the opportunity of observing the physical state of the brain of a man suddenly and instantaneously killed when in the first stage of excitement by alcohol. It looked as if it had been injected with vermilion, its whole pulp being so studded with red points that it was scarcely perceptible, and its outer surface being enclosed in a network of coagulated red blood.

When more and more alcohol continues to be accumulated in the system, the mere instinctive actions of life, which are immediately under the control of the spinal cord, become disturbed and imperfectly carried on. The directing power over some of the muscles is lost, and the energy of the whole muscular system is diminished. The muscles of the lower lip and of the lower limbs are the first to feel this unnatural torpor. Then trembling, shuddering, spasms, and possibly even convulsive paroxysms are manifested in greater or less degree. Faintness and vomiting frequently supervene, and in some sense may be looked upon as salutary effects, as they tend to arrest the further increase of alcoholization of the blood. In this stage, however, paralysis of vital power has reached to the nerve-substance of the spinal cord.

The nerve-pulp of the brain itself is next brought within the grasp of the deadly influence, and the faculties of the mind are proportionately impaired. First the control of the judgment and the will disappear, and the rational part of the mental manifestations gives way to the emotional, the impulsive, and the purely instinctive parts. As Dr. Richardson characterizes this state: "The reason is off duty, and the mere animal instincts and sentiments are laid atrociously bare." In the yet more advanced stage of poisoning by alcohol the paralysis of the higher nerve-centres, and of the brain, is carried to its full end. All inlets of the senses are closed, all consciousness and sensation are destroyed, and all power of voluntary movement is effaced. The heart still beats, and the blood circulates, and the breathing is unconsciously sustained, but those are the sole remnants of vitality, the slender threads by which a hold is retained upon living existence; and it is a very remarkable incident in this insensible stage of drunkenness that it is in the main the production of this unconscious and powerless state which lies overhanging the very brink of the grave, that saves the last

spark before the "light is put out." If the quantity of the subtle poison that has been introduced into the stomach has been in enormous strength and excess, the flame which human agency or art cannot re-illumine is irreparably extinguished, and the insensible mass passes on into the condition of lifeless clay. But if the dose of the intoxicating agent has been short of this quantity, as the circulation and the breathing are continued, and as no more of the poison can, for the time, be introduced, the elimination and clearing away of the accumulated load begins, and gradually the consciousness and the sensibility and reasoning power return as the burden of the volatile spirit is withdrawn from the nerve-pulp and exhaled from the natural outlets of the frame. The physical cause of intoxication, it will therefore be understood, is an absolute, if passing, disorganization of the great nerve-centres and brain. The delicate pulp-like structure of those highly vitalized organs is, for the time, so changed by the presence of the spirit in its substance that it ceases to be able to perform its ordinary office. All manifestations of nerve-power, and brain-power, are the development of force out of rapid change in material substance as absolutely, and as essentially, as the manifestations of heat are the development of force out of destructive combustion of coal. Coal ceases for the time to be capable of burning, and of developing heat, when it is mingled with an extraneous damping agent, such as water. In the same way brain-pulp ceases, for the time, to be able to use up its substance, and to develop out of it its proper energy, when it is mingled with extraneous suffocating spirit. In the case of the brain the arrest of the destruction of its substance is the stoppage of its vital power, because the energetic organ *lives* in that very state of unceasing decomposition and change. The arrest is therefore paralysis of the brain, and the various incidental discomforts of alcoholic inebriation — the smaller by-play of the sad tragedy — such as neuralgic pains, headache, inability to sleep, nausea, twitchings, palpitation of the heart, *muscæ volitantes* before the eyes, and mental illusions and disordered fancies, must all be classed in the same category, that namely of nerve-paralysis. In all instances in which intoxication does not ensue upon the introduction of large quantities of alcohol into the blood the immunity seems to be due to some accidental incompatibility in the vital material which prevents the absorption of

the alcohol into the substance of the brain-pulp. In such cases the alcoholized blood appears to pass through the minute channels of the nerve-pulp, very much as water would pass through the pores of a well-oiled sponge.

When very strong alcohol is suddenly thrown into the stomach of a living animal in very large quantity, it acts as an immediate poison of the most deadly power. In an experiment made by Dr. Anstie with the view of examining this form of its influence, three ounces of proof spirit mixed with three ounces of water were administered to a healthy dog weighing ten pounds and a quarter. The animal was unconscious and almost insensible in seven minutes and a half, and died from arrest of the breathing in two hours and a half. Similar effects have ensued with men who have swallowed several glasses of strong spirit, such as rum, in rapid succession. It is somewhat remarkable that very concentrated spirit cannot be taken up out of the stomach into the blood. But the spirit gets over this difficulty for itself by effecting its own dilution; it draws water out from the moist living textures around, until from this cause it is rendered dilute enough to be allowed to pass through the pores of the gastric and alimentary membrane.

When the extreme and unconscious stage of drunkenness is recovered from under the influence of the natural elimination of the volatile narcotic poison, the nerve-substance returns after a time to its customary state, unless the deranged condition has been one of frequent recurrence. But if the same state of grave derangement has been produced in these delicate and sensitive textures again and again, a more permanent disorder is produced which is of the nature of irremediable disorganization. All other vital organs, as well as the nerves and the brain, are built up essentially of fine filtering membranes, and of the intermeshings of minute bloodvessels, and their proper offices are performed by the same process of dialysis which has been described. Certain ingredients are selected out of the blood by the transudation powers of the moist porous membranes, and are put into the substance of the organs, and certain other ingredients are passed back into the blood through the membranes from the living texture. The presence of superabundant alcohol in the minute pores of these membranes does not however contribute to the perfection of their dialyzing operations, any more than it helps

the functions of the nerve-pulp and the brain, and if the alcohol is kept there in large charge very long, or is brought back there very frequently, the delicate membranes at last get thickened and dried, and retain matters in their own substance which ought to pass through. The blotched and pimpled state of the skin, and especially of the nose, of habitual drunkards is a pertinent and very palpable illustration of the way in which alcohol affects soft living membranes when they are kept saturated with it. The more delicate internal membranes of the secreting organs, and of the nerve-pulp, are injured in exactly the same manner, but even more grievously. The liver suffers very severely from the first, because it is the organ which in some way is most immediately concerned with the elimination and expulsion of the spirit out of the blood. It gets contracted and shrivelled into a hard half-disorganized mass. The kidneys are next affected, because when the liver is so injured as to cease to be able to do its own proper work of secreting and removing bile from the blood, extra strain is thrown upon them, and they strive, although ineffectually, to accomplish what the liver fails to do, until they break down also under the unaccustomed strain. When the membranes of the stomach are included in this structural deterioration, this organ ceases to be able to digest the food as it does in its uninjured condition, and there are all the discomforts of obstinate indigestion. The lungs in their turn are involved in the mischief. The inexorable craving for strong drink, to which the name of dyspomania has been given, and the fierce madness of paroxysmal drunkenness are both forms of structural degradation of the brain-substance by persistent, or often renewed, irritation with alcohol. The last stage but one of the destruction of the brain-fibres by its continued use is the "trembling delirium" (*delirium tremens*), in which tremors occur through the whole muscular system, and return paroxysmally in the form, not of muscular contraction, but of wave-like transmissions of incapacity to contract through the muscular bands; and the last stage of this especial lesion is fully declared epileptic convulsion.

The remarks upon the physiological influence of alcohol that have been hitherto made apply entirely to that best-known form of it which is found in large quantity in wine, and which is actually and properly "spirit of wine." There are, however, numerous other forms of this potent prin-

ciple, which, although agreeing in their poisonous or intoxicating power, differ amongst themselves in their precise action upon the nervous system. The common alcohol procured from wine is known to the chemists as ethylic alcohol. Another form, which is produced from the distillation of wood, is termed methylic alcohol. A third kind is called butylic alcohol, and yet a fourth, procured from potatoe starch, amylic alcohol or fusel oil. In all these each successive alcohol of the series has a higher proportion of carbon and hydrogen in its composition, the hydro-carbon molecule, which replaces the atom of hydrogen, being of a more complex and a more abundantly carbonized nature. The result of this is that each alcohol in the progressive series is heavier, less soluble, and less volatile, and at the same time more virulent and fell as a poison, because it accumulates in the blood more readily, and is less easily cleared away.

But even this does not complete the group of these remarkable compounds. When all the hydrogen contained in a molecule of water is replaced by a complex hydro-carbon molecule by processes which the chemist well knows how to employ, alcohol is no longer the result, but in the place of it a yet more volatile liquid which is known under the general designation of ether, and every one of the long series of alcohols has its own appropriate ethereal derivative. These ethers are formed out of the alcohols when there are acids present to contribute to the transformation. As both alcohols and acids are present in wine, this manufacture goes on in the wine on a very extensive scale. Even after the wine has been incarcerated in its glass prison, the subtle conversion is continued, until the ardent new wine is finally mellowed down into a softer ethereal liquid. When to these considerations is added the further recognition of the vast array of acids which is present in the fermented grape-juice, and of the even more numerous group of odoriferous essences and condiments — the subtle spirits of aroma and bouquet — which are generated by the refined alchemy of the grape, there ceases to be any room for the slightest remnant of wonder that the diversity of wine is virtually without a recognizable limit. Of the finer French wines alone, without noticing the more ignoble crowd of inferior growths, not less than 2,040 distinct varieties are enumerated in the work of Drs. Thudichum and Dupré.

The distinctive peculiarities of the

physiological action of these different kinds of alcohol and ether is a very wide subject, and as interesting to the scientific physiologist as it is wide, on account of the illustrative light which is derived from the study of their method of affecting the nervous organization. They all essentially agree in their power of intoxicating and injuring the vital integrity of the structures; but some begin their attack at one part of this organization, and others at another part. The greater number of the vast family are, however, in such relatively minute quantity in wine, that although they affect such general characters as taste, fragrance, and piquancy, they hardly assume any real physiological importance in reference to these beverages. The œnanthic ether, the secondary product which confers upon wine its well-known vinous smell, only exists in wine in the proportion of one part to forty thousand. The amylic alcohol, or fusel oil, which is not unfrequently added in distilled spirits in common use as an intentional adulteration, on account of the unctuous, fruity, ripe-pear like flavour which it communicates, is very powerful for mischief. It rapidly produces muscular tremors, depression of bodily temperature, and the most profound insensibility, and these several effects, when once brought about, are maintained very much longer than are the analogous states caused by ethylic alcohol, on account of the low solubility and volatility of the agent.

In referring to the agreeable and attractive qualities with which ethylic alcohol is naturally associated in wine, and to the entire absence of these pleasant attributes in the other forms of spirits, ethers, and allied narcotic principles, Dr. Anstie makes one thoughtful remark which deserves to be well weighed, if only as a suggestive reflection. He says:—

Alcohol was never designed by the wisdom of Providence to be employed by the human race as an anæsthetic at all, but for the sake of those stimulant qualities of its non-narcotic doses, which are, to a certain extent, shared by small doses of ether and chloroform. It seems as if the former were intended to be the medicine of those ailments which are engendered of the necessary every-day evils of civilized life, and which has therefore been made attractive to the senses, and is easily retained in the tissues, and in various ways approves itself to our judgment as a food; while the others, which are more rarely needed for their stimulant properties, and are chiefly valuable for their beneficent temporary poisonous action by the help of which painful surgical operations are sustained with impunity,

are in a great measure deprived of these attractions, and of their facilities for entering and remaining in the system.

In other words, Dr. Anstie obviously conceived that wine has been generated, in its rich and tempting variety, in the great laboratory of nature, to subserve some beneficent purpose connected with the increasing nerve-strain of ripening civilization, and possibly also as a part of the general economy by which the plant caters for the support of animal life. Nor is it inconsistent with the dictates of a sound philosophy to entertain this view, even in the face of the anomalous fact that the serviceable agent, in its unregulated employment, is so powerful for harm, if it is at the same time borne in mind that through his higher faculties man is quite equal to the task of resisting temptation when he once fairly understands the true circumstances of his position. In the case of strong drink, at the present time, ignorance has certainly quite as much to answer for as inability to withstand a pleasurable seduction.

There is, however, yet another point of view in which the very general employment of alcohol as a beverage by man has to be looked at. In his Cantor Lectures Dr. Richardson drew attention to the startling fact that the capital which is invested in the production of alcohol in the British Isles is not less than 117,000,000*l.* But the enormous addition which would have to be made to this vast sum if, in the same way, the argument were enlarged, and the value were given of the capital employed in the production of wine in the wide stretch of the grape-yielding countries, it is quite impossible to conceive. In the financial year ending in 1874 the duties paid within the British Isles for the various forms of fermented drink were—for foreign spirits, 5,329,650*l.*; foreign wine, 1,989,855*l.*; home-made spirits, 14,639,562*l.*; and for malt to be converted into beer, 7,753,617*l.* If to these various sums there be added the further amount which represents the brewers' license taking the place of the hop-duty, and the duty on sugar consumed in brewing, it at once appears that at the present time the public revenue derives yearly a clear 30,000,000*l.* sterling from direct taxes levied on alcoholic drink; and it will be further observed that of this great sum very nearly two-thirds relate to the concentrated form in which the powerful agent is procured by the employment of the still—that is, by the application of science and art to strengthen

the spirit beyond the point to which it can possibly be raised by natural fermentation; and very nearly one-half refers to the cheaper form of this concentrated product which is prepared in the home manufacture, and which therefore, it is to be presumed, expresses approximately the consumption by the less wealthy portion of the community. The exact number of the millions of pounds sterling that are swallowed in the form of strong drink in our own islands alone can scarcely be ascertained on account of the diversity of form in which the product is presented for consumption, and on account of the complex relations which connect duty and quantity in the different forms. The amount can only be guessed at under the guidance of such figures as have been named. If, however, one penny in the pound upon taxable incomes be taken to represent, as it is stated it will shortly do, a sum of two millions of pounds, then the 30,000,000*l.* paid yearly to the revenue by alcohol is tantamount to an income-tax of fifteen pence in the pound upon such incomes, and to an assessment of 3*1*/₂ a year upon an individual income of 500*l.* per annum. The fact which is involved in the figures of these several statements would assuredly be a very surprising one, even if the large sum of money were expended in an article of unproductive but harmless luxury. As Dr. Richardson suggested in his lectures, a very strong impression would be made upon the public mind if, after some long period in which the boilers of steam-engines had been fed with a mixture of spirit and water, it was suddenly discovered that the engines would work quite as well with the water without the spirit, and that the millions of pounds that had been devoted to the production of the spirit had all been so much unnecessary waste. But the argument goes very much beyond this in the case of "the millions of engines called men," if it can be shown that there is hurtful as well as wasteful expenditure, and that in a very large proportion of instances the engines would have worked even better without the costly addition of the spirit. In these days of the scientific applications of the doctrines of economy it certainly must remain a matter of some surprise to thoughtful men that in a land of advanced cultivation and intelligence so many millions of good money are continuously applied to the production of a commodity which, in the existing habits of society, may reasonably be held to be pernicious alike to the pockets, to the health, and to the morals of the community. It

unfortunately happens that the question of the influence of alcohol is a difficult one to deal with on account of the subtle effects and the complicated instrumentalities which have to be encountered and unravelled at every turn; but it is for that very reason a question that imperatively demands a more searching inquiry and a more concentrated attention than it has yet received at the hands of the general community; and there are some broad facts in connection with it, such as some of those which have been especially dwelt upon in the course of this article, that are already beyond the pale of uncertainty or doubt, and that therefore deserve, even now, to be made the base of an improved practice and a new faith.

From Temple Bar.

HER DEAREST FOE.

CHAPTER XII.

THIS first day was both wearisome and depressing. Mrs. Temple felt bewildered by the effort to understand the mystery of marks and all the technicalities which the accomplished Miss Potter glibly poured forth, and cast down by the trifling nature of the sales. A few girls, with broad, country accents, and exceedingly unpolished manners, came in for penny-worths of this and sixpence-worth of the other. One young lady, the clergyman's daughter Miss Potter said, asked for some traced muslin-work, which cost the large sum of two shillings and sixpence. And a huge, good-humoured looking farmer with yellow leggings, a low-crowned hat, a whip, spurs, and a fiery-red face, who called Mrs. Temple "mum," brought a considerably-rubbed Berlin-wool pattern, and asked that all the requisite wools might be supplied, and he would call for the parcel on his way home in a couple of hours, which he did, and paid for it standing in the doorway, his face redder than ever, the reins of his nag over one arm, his whip under the other, while he exclaimed at the cost of "such-like darned fiddle-faddles, and hoped his lass would be satisfied now."

"This has not been a fair average day," said Miss Potter, as she counted up the day's gain, and found it amounted to seven shillings and fivepence halfpenny. "In short, I have never known it so low."

"That is curious," said Mrs. Temple dryly, "and discouraging."

"It is," returned Miss Potter candidly;

"but I wouldn't mind, if I were you. There are many things to account for a temporary depression. It is just after the Easter holidays; and the young ladies at Miss Monitor's have scarcely settled to their work and their studies. And a great archery *fête* at Colnebrook Castle was to come off yesterday, you see; so none of the county ladies would have time to think of fancywork the very day after. You must just wait a bit."

And the young widow resolved to be patient, more especially as she liked the look of the place, and felt still more disposed towards it after an evening stroll past the North Parade houses, to where the roadway widened into a gravelled sweep, from which she discovered a narrow path leading along the base of the cliffs, now descending almost to the beach, now climbing steeply up over some projecting crag, which was lashed or caressed by the waves at high water. Following this, in some places rather giddy, footway, Mrs. Temple reached a spot where a sudden inward curve of the cliffs formed a tiny bay. The path she had followed zig-zagged upwards to a coast-guard station, but another branched off, and led gently down a few paces to a little rough wooden jetty, bleached almost ghastly white by the constant wash of the sea; while some outlying standing timbers, set up to break the force of the waves, were covered with black-green seaweed, which, as the tide was now half high, and coming in, floated mournfully on the waters, like the long locks of some drowning creature. The shelter afforded here had permitted a growth of grass and brambles mixed with the gorse, now in full yellow bloom, and loading the air with its honeyed sweetness, to tone down the rugged grandeur of the cliff, and in the deeper hollow where the slope was least steep, and more of soil would lie, a small group of stunted oak-trees nestled, throwing out thick gnarled branches with the ungainly strength of misshapen dwarfs.

The utter silence, the unspeakable repose, enchanted Kate. She descended to the little pier, and strolled leisurely along it, resting for a while on a low bench at the end, and drinking in the loveliness of sea and sky. By-and-by, a grey-bearded coast-guard-man, in a little boat, pulled round one of the points which sheltered the bay, and fastened his skiff to the pier, ascending by a straight sort of ladder made between the timbers, with a goodly basket of fish on his arm, and a loose heap of brown net on his shoulder. He gave Mrs. Tem-

ple a friendly "good even," and they exchanged a little talk. Then she watched him lazily as he walked up the path, after having spread out his net to dry, and looked into a sort of cave, half-natural half-artificial, where a large six-oared boat was safely stowed.

"What a relief it will be sometimes to come here after the toils of the day," said Mrs. Temple, as she rose, wonderfully refreshed, to return. "If I can at all make an existence, I will stay here." And, as she mused, the memory of the last time she had sat in the open air came back to her, with Sir Hugh Galbraith's cruel words, which had so often sounded in her ear since. She had never breathed them to any one; she never would, but not the less clearly were they remembered. Generally, the thought roused indignation, and a fierce desire to show that, at any rate, she had held the same place in her husband's estimation from first to last, by proving that the will which had robbed her, to enrich him, was false; but to-night the loneliness, the beauty of her surroundings, inclined her to a kind of melancholy regret that she should be so misjudged, so cruelly wronged. It was sad, too, after a glimpse of all that life might have given to her, young, rich in a sense of enjoyment, and rich enough in material wealth, to be suddenly cast out into the outer world of poverty and hard work. "I must not be false to my own principles," she thought, rallying her forces as she hurried on, slightly alarmed by the increasing darkness. "Work is a good in itself. All I hope is that Fanny will not find life insupportably dull here. I shall not keep her long, that I can see. It will be terrible to be without her."

Miss Potter's astonishment was loud when she found where Mrs. Temple had directed her evening walk. "Dear, dear, it is such a lonely, dismal place! I don't think even the visitors go there unless indeed in a party, to gather seaweed at the cove when the tide is out."

The succeeding day was considerably more animated. Some young ladies on horseback rode in from one of the neighbouring places, and made quite a clatter outside, while one of the attendant grooms came in for a variety of articles, and Miss Potter herself had to go out and receive directions.

Later in the day, a very tall, thin, elderly gentleman, with glittering black eyes and rather hectic colour, thin iron-grey hair brushed back from a bony brow, a huge shirt frill, and a long single-breasted

green coat, came in with some importance.

"Good morning, good morning!" — knocking the top of his hunting-whip against the brim of his hat. "All blooming, I see. And this is our new proprietress — eh — eh?" — a keen stare at Mrs. Temple, with slightly knitted brow.

"Yes, Dr. Slade," simpered Miss Potter; "this is Mrs. Temple."

The doctor knocked his whip against his hat again, and Mrs. Temple bent her head with a sudden strange feeling of being out of her place — the introduction was so unlike anything she had ever experienced before.

"Well, ma'am," said the doctor, "shall you let lodgings, like your predecessor, or have you a tribe of children to overflow into the nooks and crannies of this old Noah's ark?"

Mrs. Temple had time to school herself while he spoke, and was ready to answer with a smile when he ceased.

"I daresay I shall let lodgings, Dr. Slade; but I scarcely yet know what I shall do."

"Well, you had better let me know when you make up your mind. I am the dispenser of fortune, as well as physic, in this direction. I fancy I'll have a couple of invalids on my hands this season; but you must give better cooking than the last sufferer had. Chops frightened by frizzling till they were black in the face, by jingo! That's not nutritious diet."

"But *my* chops, if I ever have the honour of serving any to your patients, shall 'blush celestial rosy red' at their own perfection," said Mrs. Temple, laughing good-humouredly.

The doctor stared for a moment, and then cried, "Shall they? By Jupiter! those are the sort of chops, and you are the sort of woman that will do." Then, turning to Miss Potter, he asked, "Have you, among the rubbish of your nonsensical bazaar, a piece of court-plaster? I know I have none; and a — bramble caught my hand here" (holding it out) "as I was cutting across a corner of the dingle, after being kept nearly an hour listening to that old blockhead, Farmer Owen, maundering about his inside. So I thought I would give you a chance before going on to the chemist."

"Dear, dear, what a bad place," said Miss Potter sympathizingly; "and I am really afraid we don't keep such a thing as court-plaster."

"I ought to have known better than to

have looked for anything useful here," retorted the doctor, with an awful scowl.

And then an instinctive "trade" impulse stirred our young widow to exclaim, "If it is not in the shop, Dr. Slade, I have some in my dressing-case. I will bring it, and put it on for you, if you will promise never to go elsewhere for your court-plaster in future."

"Done!" cried the doctor, slapping his hand against his leg; "but mind you don't let yourself be out of it. By George!" he continued, as Mrs. Temple left the shop, "that's a clever baggage! Why she would buy and sell you and poor Mrs. Browne, before you would know where you were."

"She is very pleasant, I am sure; but rather inexperienced — new to business — and depends a great deal upon *me*," returned Miss Potter, with her sweetest smile.

"Depends upon you!" repeated the doctor, with anything but flattering emphasis. "Who is she? Where did you pick her up?"

"Oh, I know nothing of Mrs. Temple, except that she answered the advertisement about the business, and that she comes from London."

"London is a wide place," said the doctor.

Here Mrs. Temple returned with the required plaster, and proceeded coolly and dexterously to cut and affix it, undisturbed by the doctor's announcement that he was in a desperate hurry; that he had left his horse outside with the reins over a post, and he dared say he would chuck them off and run away, to the damage of all juvenile Pierstoffs.

"Do you want to test my nerve?" said Mrs. Temple, suddenly lifting her soft eyes to his with a smile, which produced a very different effect from poor Miss Potter's.

"I fancy you are equal to it, if I do," said the doctor, with a sort of grim gallantry. "You are a deuced wide-awake young woman, my dear."

"Thank you," returned Mrs. Temple gravely. "There; I think that will keep your hand comfortable. Remember, in future you are to come here for your court-plaster."

"That's a bargain," cried Dr. Slade; "and, moreover, I shall make my wife buy all her stuff to knit my socks with here — that is to say, if what you sell isn't rotten."

"Thank you, again," said Mrs. Temple.

"Mrs. Slade always did patronize us," simpered Miss Potter.

"Did she? I know she used to send for balls of worsted yarn — what do you call it? — to Stoneborough — ay, to London. Don't you believe all she told *you*. Good morning to you." Another knock of the whip against his hat, and the doctor strode away.

"Your doctor seems something of a character," said Mrs. Temple, looking after him.

"Oh, indeed, he is a most extraordinary man. He was looked upon as quite the king of Pierstoffe; but I think things are a little different now. There is a new doctor here — a quiet, grave, exceedingly genteel young man — who is making his way wonderfully even with the best families in the town. But Dr. Slade still keeps in with the county people. You see he hunts with the gentry, and they are used to him; but it is said that young Mr. — I mean Dr. — Bryant made one or two extraordinary cures of people that had gone on years and years with Dr. Slade. Any way, Dr. Slade hates the other like poison, and abuses and swears at him quite awful; but Dr. Bryant, I am told, never mentions Dr. Slade but with the greatest respect. The young doctor is not married, and that made matters worse when Miss Monitor called him in; every one said that an elderly — not to say old — married man, was the proper person for a young ladies' school (though there are very curious stories told of Dr. Slade some years back). But Miss Monitor declared that a great London doctor said if Miss Goldfrass (that's a great heiress, who is at the school) was ill, — and she generally is, — no one was to be called in but Dr. Bryant. Then he is so regular at church; and poor Dr. Slade never darkens the door of church or chapel."

"Not a very pleasant account," said the young widow thoughtfully. "Still, I seem fated to accept this rather rampant Ha-keem for my partisan."

"What did you say?" asked Miss Potter puzzled.

"Oh, that Dr. Slade seemed inclined to be friendly. What is his wife like?"

"A very nice lady indeed, but that timid and nervous it makes one uncomfortable. I believe she was a great beauty once, but there is very little of it left now."

Ten days flew away with wonderful rapidity, and Kate Travers was astonished to find how quickly things, so new and strange, were growing familiar. The hardest nut of all was to take kindly and easily

to the peculiar style of civility with which women, often her inferiors, never her superiors, addressed her, as some one quite out of their sphere. But she was too sensible not to school herself to look on this as a mere accident of business, not touching her real position.

"I hope when Fanny comes she will not be thoughtless and offend people, our fellow-citizens in trade," mused Kate; "for it will not do to hold aloof, and make ourselves unpopular. After all, they have the same natures, the same objects in life, the same affections; the difference only lies in our exterior coats of varnish. What an amount of vulgar ignorance exists among nominally educated ladies, who speak correctly, and are sufficiently well-bred not to rub you the wrong way unless it suits them! Women are generally tolerable, but men, without the 'outward and visible' signs of gentlemen, must be dreadful, and yet real gentlemen must be exceedingly rare in every class. Still there is knowledge to be gained from every fresh page in the book of life, and ere long I shall turn to another."

Then, as usual, her thoughts flew away to the standing obstacle of her life. She counted largely on what old Gregory's son would have to tell of his father's communications, touching the will he had witnessed, and was supposed to have written. But when would he return? She had carefully kept up a correspondence with his sister, Mrs. Bell, who had told her that she had received a handsome present from Sir Hugh Galbraith, that she had quite re-established her school, and hoped to do well; but there was still no news of her brother.

As the fortnight progressed Mrs. Temple saw, or imagined she saw, her way to a fair amount of success in the new life she had adopted. Many things were asked for which were not in stock, and she thus gathered ideas as to the further development of the business already existing at the Berlin Bazaar. Moreover, a judicious selection of magazines and periodicals, sent by the indefatigable Tom, took Pierstoffe by surprise, and acted favourably on other branches of her trade.

She, therefore, made up her mind to close with the agent, and with infinite pleasure wrote for Fanny and Mills to join her. With what delight she looked forward to seeing them once more, after being plunged in such a flood of strangeness! All this time she had had frequent letters from Fanny, written in better spirits than the faithful little soul really felt; on

one point they were unanimous, Mills was perfectly angelic. "If she had not a tolerably fair appetite, I should think she was going to die," concluded Fanny in one of her epistles. Tom had paid his promised visit, and was more delightful and audacious than ever. So the young widow's mind had been kept tranquil in the direction of Boulogne.

It was the day after she had despatched her letter of recall, and market-day besides, so they had been quite busy all the morning. Now dinner-time was past, and the little shop had been empty for a few minutes — Miss Potter was absent — when the door was suddenly darkened by the entrance of an exceedingly large lady, tall as well as stout, richly dressed in a thick violet silk, a black velvet mantle trimmed with costly lace, a green velvet and satin bonnet with crimson roses, and Brussels lace veil, a chain round her neck, and bracelets slipping down on the fat, pudgy hands, which were tightly crammed into violet gloves; one of them held a violet and lace parasol, the other a ribbon, the other end of which was fastened to a painfully corpulent pug, at whose collar a little ball-like bell tinkled perpetually. All this finery, it must be confessed, looked like every-day gear, not Sunday clothes, on the stout lady, who waddled into the middle of the shop, and then, gazing full at Mrs. Temple with little, sharp, green-grey eyes, exclaimed in a fat voice, but with a good accent and pleasant manner, "I do not think I ever saw you before! Where is Miss Potter?"

"She has only just left the shop, and will be here directly."

"And, in the mean time, have you any materials for this sort of lace-work?" resumed the lady, taking a small parcel from her pocket, and opening it.

Mrs. Temple examined it with much interest. "I am sorry to say we have not, nor have I seen anything like it in England."

"Then, have you been lately on the Continent?" asked her customer quickly.

"I came from France ten days ago."

"Oh, indeed! Well, and what am I to do about the work? There is a young lady staying with me — a charming girl, but very delicate — and quite crazy about this work. I promised to bring her back patterns, and everything."

"I am exceedingly sorry not to have it. Could the young lady wait three days, and she shall have several patterns to choose from?" said Mrs. Temple, thinking of Fanny's arrival.

"I daresay she would. It would take as long to send to town. Oh, Miss Potter, how do you do?" as that individual returned. "What is going to be done now. Has the Berlin Bazaar been sold — are you going to desert us?"

"Well, my lady, I suppose I shall be going out to my brother soon. Can I get you anything this morning?"

"Yes; there is a list of cottons and tapes my maid gave me. And tell me — how is poor old Mr. Browne? has he gone to live with his daughter?"

"He is pretty well — at least was — when I heard last. He is not living with Mrs. Penny."

"Well, he ought! Where has she sent him?"

"Oh, he is quite comfortable, I assure you, my lady. He is boarded with a very respectable party quite near Mrs. Penny's farm."

"Ah, the respectable party will take the money and starve him, probably."

"I hope not," replied Miss Potter meekly. She had permitted Mrs. Temple to take the list and select the articles named in it, in order to attend to her ladyship's cross-examination.

"And who is this person?" continued the stout lady, in an audible aside.

"Oh, Mrs. Temple; she is going to purchase the business and settle here."

"Doesn't look the least like business herself." Then to Mrs. Temple, "So you are to be our old friend Mrs. Browne's successor. I hope the Bazaar will be equally successful with you."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Temple, bowing slightly.

"But latterly there has been a decided falling-off. Miss Potter is always 'just out' of whatever one wants."

"I shall, of course, renew the stock, and hope to add some useful branches to the business. I have already some of the newest publications."

"Ah, yes, I see," interrupted her ladyship, wheeling her chair round with a sudden, violent effort, and beginning to overhaul them. "'Household Words,' 'The Family Herald,' 'The Cheerful Visitor,' — newspapers, too! that's a good idea. And, pray, had you a shop in France, Mrs. Temple?"

"No," said the young widow gently. She could not bring herself to add, "my lady," which slipped so readily from Miss Potter's tongue.

"Ah, perhaps your husband managed the business?"

"He did."

"Ah, you will be quite a tyro, then. Pray, have you many children?"

"I have none."

"So much the better; so much the better. Children and business do not agree, I imagine. And are you going to live here all alone? Have you any friends in Pierstoeffe?"

"I know no one here; but I shall be joined by a young lady—I mean person," correcting herself with a smile, "who will be my assistant when I lose Miss Potter, who cannot, I fear, stay with me as long as I should wish."

"Hum! that may do; but you must be very circumspect. You must indeed—a handsome young woman like you! Are you going to send out circulars?"

"I shall act on your suggestion," said Mrs. Temple gravely, "as soon as I have finally arranged the purchase."

"Do; and be sure to send me one. And I tell you what—you ought to give credit. There is so much inconvenience and vulgarity about ready money. I would certainly give three months' credit to residents, and the county, if I were you; but don't trust the visitors; they are a doubtful set."

"I shall consider it," returned Mrs. Temple.

"Well, are these my cottons and things?"

"Yes, my lady."

"How much does it all come to?"

"Three and fourpence-halfpenny."

"What a quantity of money! There, I have only three and threepence, and I do not care to change a sovereign. I will pay the three-halfpence another time. You see"—to Mrs. Temple—"there is a case in point. I feel the cost of those wretched reels of cotton because I see three shillings going out of my hands into yours; but if your account for five pounds, or more, came in at the end of three months, I would write a cheque for it as cheerfully as possible! It is wonderful what a melancholy effect it has seeing the actual coin go away from you. Now I must leave you; I have to pay a visit at No. 6, North Parade. Do you know anything of the people?" To Miss Potter, "Have they been in here?"

Miss Potter professed complete ignorance.

"I know nothing about them," continued the stout lady; "but a cousin of mine in town begged me to call; there is a sick child or some such reason for coming here so early. Good morning. Mind you get the lace patterns, Mrs. Temple. I shall

look in soon again, and see how you are getting on." Another unmitigated stare—"I can't help thinking I have seen you somewhere before. Good morning," and she walked out of the shop with surprising briskness for so heavy a figure.

"And, pray, who is that remarkably curious personage?" cried Mrs. Temple, when she was fairly out of hearing.

"That is one of our great ladies, and best customers," returned Miss Potter. "That is Lady Styles, of Weston. She has a beautiful place about four or five miles away, on the road to Stoneborough. She is a wealthy lady, and quite her own mistress, for Sir Marmaduke Styles is very sickly, and is often away in London for his health; but she is the greatest gossip in the whole country. She will come and buy things here if it is only to cross-question you, till she finds out everything. She is not ill-natured, I believe, but so dreadfully curious. There is no keeping anything from her."

"I shall try, however," thought Mrs. Temple to herself. "I wonder if she has ever really met me! I think not; I think I should remember her." And Mrs. Temple ran quickly up-stairs to write for the post, enjoining Fanny on no account to quit Boulogne without a supply of patterns and materials such as had caught their attention, during the only ramble for which they had had time, in the Rue de l'Ecu.

CHAPTER XIII.

KATE TRAVERS, or rather Mrs. Temple, had not felt so light of heart since the day on which Ford disclosed his unlucky discovery, as she did when welcoming Fanny and Mills to their new home. First, there was the great joy of having them once more with her—the consciousness of her own courage in having opposed the opinion of those she most regarded, justified as she felt by the strong hope of success in her brave undertaking, and then a certain satisfaction in the pleasantness of the locality where her lot had fallen. She had had tea laid in the best sitting-room, and as she had permitted herself the extravagance of a man to put the garden in order, and prune its wild luxuriance, things looked their best.

"What a pretty place, Kate! Quite a lady-like room," exclaimed Fanny, who was enjoying her tea with a traveller's appetite. "Do you know, I quite long to be in the shop, coaxing people to buy all sorts of things they do not want. What is the next article, madam. Is not that the style?"

"Bless me, Miss Fanny, how you do run on!" said Mills.

"I trust you may like it," returned Mrs. Travers. "But you will find standing all day very fatiguing. I did at first, but I have become used to it."

"Must you *never* sit down?"

"Oh yes, you can, sometimes, when there is nothing to do. But we hope to have very little of that sort of rest."

"Dear, dear!"—a deep sigh from Mills.

"And have any of your neighbours called upon you?" continued Fanny, helping herself to more brown bread and butter. "*Do* shopkeepers call on each other?"

"I really cannot tell," said Mrs. Temple, smiling. "I am not thoroughly initiated yet. I imagine they have no time for these ceremonies; at any rate, no one has called upon me except the doctor, and, although he generally buys a pennyworth of this or sixpence-worth of the other, I always look upon his visits as personal; he gets so much talk for his money."

"Indeed!" cried Fanny. "And has he a wife? Is he old or young, or nice or nasty, or —?"

"Rein up your curiosity a little, Fanny. He has a wife—he is rather old—and I cannot exactly say he is nice."

"My curiosity is at an end, then. Do you know, Mills and I grew rather fond of Boulogne. We would have been quite fond of it had you been there."

"*Me* fond of it! no indeed! It's a queer, unnatural place," quoth Mills. "Why, if you even go to thread a needle, the more you twist the thread, the more it comes untwisted. And then the soup and the messes! Why, you get up near as hungry as when you sat down."

"All the better for digestion; but come, Kate, let us see your new abode," said Fanny rising.

And then a pleasant excursion through the various nooks and corners, the more dignified apartments and domestic offices of the house, ensued. Fanny expressed the most ardent admiration, and sketched the outline of a romantic tale, as she inspected the principal rooms, which Mrs. Temple intended to let. A melancholy and mysterious invalid, of refined habits and blighted affections, was to occupy them. Mrs. Temple was to soothe his last moments; he was to prove a millionaire, and leave all his wealth "to you," concluded Fanny, "or to me—and then we should go shares!"

"No more wills, if you love me, Fan;"

said Mrs. Temple, laughing. "Why should he not recover, find balm for his wounded heart, and marry *you*?"

"Oh! but I couldn't, you know," cried Fanny, and stopped, blushing brightly.

"I *know* nothing," returned her friend, "but I guess a good deal."

Mrs. Mills did not commit herself. She found no fault, neither did she bestow much approval. The "wash'us" was, she admitted, handy, and the cupboards convenient; but this was balanced by considerable doubts touching "no end of work" to keep such a heap of odd corners clean. Then the "girl" underwent a grim examination, from which she evidently drew unfavourable auguries of her own future, and asked if she might go home "to see mother." Then, as the evening was lovely, and Miss Potter quite willing to take entire charge of the shop for the short time that remained before closing, the young widow proposed a stroll on the beach, as Fanny did not seem very tired.

"Tired! I am as fresh as a lark; ready for anything!" was the reply.

"Here, Miss Fanny," said Mills coming down-stairs at that moment; "here's the parcel you said Mrs. Travers was —"

"Hush!" cried that lady. "Do be careful, Mills. I am Mrs. Temple now. You really must not forget. Give me the parcel!"

"But, Kate," said Fanny, as they left the house together; "it is very hard to remember; and I spoiled ever so many envelopes when I wrote to you. I was sure to have 'Travers' down before I could think. I wish you had not changed it. Was it necessary?"

"Yes; I thought so. I did not like to associate poor Mr. Travers's name with a shop, for I know my being here is not his fault. Besides, I have an odd, obstinate, perhaps stupid dislike to the idea of re-suming it again until I have won my rights."

"Heigho!" said Fanny.

"Which means," returned Mrs. Temple, a little sharply, "that Tom has persuaded you that my hopes and convictions are insane crotchets. *You* think Tom an oracle; but he is not infallible."

"No, indeed, I do not; but he knows a great deal about law and things, more even than you do; though you are very, very clever, Kate dear. I wouldn't make so sure of . . . of anything, if I were you."

"Patience, patience, time will show," returned her friend a little wearily; then, after a few moments' thought, she ex-

claimed passionately, "you cannot know how deeply this blow has sunk into my soul! I shall never be quite the same again till I have rolled back that man's triumph on himself, and proved that I possessed—even if I did not deserve it—my husband's love and confidence to the last! After all," she went on, speaking slowly, dreamily, "my lot has been a little hard. I have never known real love—love I could heartily return—now I am compelled by fortune to turn aside out of the way of it. And I do believe that not only is love the whole fulfilling of the law, but of life, too, to a woman. But," in a cheerier tone, "there are many pleasant things left—among them success and revenge; not desperate, cruel revenge, you know, but a little pinching of one's enemy, just to give salt to the success. Tell me about yourself, Fan."

A long, confidential talk ensued, for Fanny was unusually sensible and satisfying, yet she avoided her own affairs somewhat; so Mrs. Temple concluded that her engagement to Tom, if it existed, was a tacit one. It was dusk when they reached the house.

"And, Kate, how long is that horrid, skinny Miss Potter to stay?"

"Another month," said Mrs. Temple, laughing. "It will take all that time to train you. She is very useful, and a good creature."

"I hate good creatures," said Fanny, with a pout.

"Which shows you are not one yourself," returned Mrs. Temple, putting the latch-key in the lock. "How thankful I am that everything has turned out favourably so far, though we must not expect it to be always sunshine! What a comfort that Mills seems tolerably pleased and in good spirits—where is she, by the way?" Mrs. Temple opened the kitchen-door as she spoke, and beheld Mills seated by the fast-dying fire, her feet stretched out resting on each other, her hands clasped together, her apron thrown over her face, a picture of hopeless affliction.

Time flew by with amazing rapidity in the busy monotony of the new life upon which Kate and Fanny had entered. To the former it was far from uninteresting. Her self-esteem was deeply pledged to its success, and she soon began, under the pressure of such a motive, to understand her work. Misunderstanding is at the root of so many dislikes; to be thoroughly known is often, to the least attractive, to possess sympathy and liking. Then it

was very delightful to perceive that as the town filled, so did her trade increase. The possession of a little ready money, too, was a great advantage at the outset, as it enabled her to renew her stock on good terms, and without any difficulty respecting references, which would have been puzzling to find. As soon as she began to ascertain the kind of goods most in demand, she felt emboldened to add sundry fancy articles to her stock of jet ornaments and trinkets—she even ventured to run up to town from Friday morning to the following evening and visit the great emporiums of Cannon Street, where, if "fancy" was not originally "bred," she has developed to an extraordinary degree. All Pierstoffe was attracted by the dazzling array which resulted from this visit, and Mrs. Temple could not refrain from laughing at the sort of pride she detected in her own heart on finding that for some time both Fanny and herself were decidedly overworked, while the average of receipts was a trifle under fourteen pounds a week.

"What do you think of that, Tom?" wrote the widow to her faithful ally; "I have put away half the money to replace what has been sold, and the rest I shall keep in the bank, as I shall want nothing for our house or other expenditure for six months at least."

Meantime Fanny had caught the taste for business, or pretended she did, though Kate shrewdly suspected she viewed the whole undertaking as playing at shop-keeping, and could not believe that in sober earnest they were always to work.

Small troubles, of course, arose. Mrs. Mills started with a fixed and unalterable hatred to the unhappy "girl" who had been kept on by Mrs. Temple. Mills knew too well what was due to herself to hear any reason on the subject; and her mistress, though sorely tempted to give way, was determined not to yield to an unjust prejudice, consequently "Sarah Jane's" was not a life of unbroken sunshine; some respite, however, was afforded to all parties by her returning each evening to "*do*" for her grandmother, and her remaining under the maternal roof till nine the following morning.

Lady Styles was another thorn in their side, though by no means an unmixed evil. Being rich and idle, she was an excellent customer, and not only bought herself, but brought many to buy; for her house was always full. Her extreme curiosity was distressing, and so alarming to poor Fanny, who had been solemnly

warned by her friend against gratifying it, that her ladyship's first visits generally cost the pretty little assistant a fit of crying. Lady Styles took the deepest interest in the Berlin Bazaar and its owner, who had taken her advice respecting the credit system, to which fact her ladyship attributed the entire success, so far, of the young widow's speculation. Perhaps the true source of Lady Styles's interest lay in her unslaked curiosity. Mrs. Temple and Fanny grew quite skilled in fencing off her queries, and tacitly permitting her to form one theory after another as to their previous history. Her conjectures, always stated with the most insolent candour, were often curiously ingenious; but the fact of Mrs. Temple having come direct from France baffled her a good deal. That there was a mystery about the fair, sedate, attentive widow, she felt quite sure, and she also felt herself bound to unravel it, if only to keep up her character. In this Dr. Slade was somewhat a hindrance. The doctor and she were old acquaintances — often partners at whist, at the various dinners to which the former, in his double character of sportsman and doctor, was frequently invited — but always more or less rivals in pursuit of the latest, the most correct, and the most startling intelligence; Dr. Slade generally mentioning Lady Styles (in safe quarters) as that "blundering old gossip, who always has the wrong end of the story;" while Lady Styles usually spoke of him as "poor dear Dr. Slade! you never can *exactly* depend on anything from *him*." Therefore, whatever theory started by her ladyship was either openly negated by the doctor, or he shook his head with a calmly contemptuous smile, as if he knew ever so much better, only he could not speak, which, as Lady Styles remarked, would be "perfectly ridiculous if it was not maddening."

The doctor continued very friendly, and masked his batteries more skilfully than Lady Styles. He fulfilled his promise by introducing an invalid gentleman and his valet as tenants to Mrs. Temple, whose three months' occupancy of her rooms very nearly paid a whole year's rent; but this piece of good fortune was not altogether without its unpleasantness also. The "valet," a thick-set, "down"-looking individual, unaccomplished in any of the suave graces which usually distinguish a "gentleman's gentleman," gave a good deal of trouble about his own and his master's food, and attracted so much of Mrs. Mills's wrath and indignation upon

himself that she had none to spare for "Sarah Jane," and grew quite friendly towards that victim during the period of counter-irritation. The tenant himself — a red-faced, grey-whiskered, short, slight man of mild aspect, well dressed in an old-fashioned style, and always wearing shoes and gaiters — developed a curious tendency to slide down the bannisters when he thought no one was looking, and to sit in his open window when all Pierstoffe was out in its best attire, with his nightcap over his hat. Whatever doubts these peculiarities might have suggested were quickly resolved into certainty by Lady Styles on the first opportunity.

"I have just been talking to Dr. Slade, Mrs. Temple," she said, "and I told him it was a great shame to quarter a madman and his keeper on you. Yes, a madman! but immensely rich — made a fortune in one day on the Stock Exchange, and lost his senses in consequence. They *say* he is not dangerous; but you can never be sure. He may get up any night and murder you and this nice little creature in your sleep. His valet sleeps in his room, you say? Oh, the cunning of madness is so extraordinary! he would escape the keeper."

A suggestion which gave Mrs. Temple no small amount of trouble, as Fanny could neither control nor conceal her fears, and every night went through nearly an hour's searching in cupboards, behind curtains, and under beds before she finally locked herself into her room.

On the whole, this slightly capricious young person was of more real use than Mrs. Temple had ventured to hope, and for the first two or three months things went smoothly in the main. By that time, however, their fellow-townspersons began to evince a desire to make their acquaintance, and Mrs. Temple determined not to hold aloof from the proffered intercourse.

Among the higher class of tradespeople, none stood higher than Mr. Turner, of "Turner and Sons," the grand, and indeed only, drapery emporium of Pierstoffe. He was a very honest, respectable man, understanding his own work thoroughly, but little else; for education in the "good old days" of his boyhood was held to be an unholy thing for any one below the rank of an esquire; and gentlemen thought they best served "God and the king" by heaping up barriers of difference between them, and the brethren like unto themselves, whom Providence, for some wise purpose, had placed upon this earth to do

their bidding. Education or no education, Mr. Turner managed to amass a good deal of money, and the more he advanced in wealth and consideration—which are indeed synonymous terms—the more he felt the want of what he himself would have termed “learning.” Not that he said so, even to the wife of his bosom—he said very little on any subject—but he resolved that his son—his only son, Joseph—should have all the advantages he had never known.

Now Joseph, though an only son, was not an only child; three elder sisters alternately cuddled and cuffed him through an early boyhood of much spoiling, while two younger ones afforded ample scope for the tyranny over weaker vessels so natural to incipient man. But no only child could have been an object of fonder hopes. He was carefully instructed at the Stoneborough grammar school; he was sent from thence to a commercial academy in the neighbourhood of London, and finally placed in a West-end establishment, to learn the higher and more elegant mysteries of business.

He was far from a dull boy. He learned something of all this, and a good deal more besides.

Mr. Turner and his family attended the little old parish church, which modern Pierstoffe had far outgrown. He was equally opposed to attending the Baptist Chapel, Salem Chapel, Little Bethel, or St. Monica's Church, a brand-new edifice erected by subscription to accommodate increasing numbers both of inhabitants and visitors (as a man of business, Mr. Turner had subscribed to it; as a man of Protestant religion, he refused to attend it), and supported by an offertory which an excellent, hard-working, lantern-jawed, long-coated Anglican priest toiled to fill with energy and ingenuity that would have been invaluable in the purveyor to a music hall—in all respect, be it written—for the Rev. Claudius St. John cared little for this world's goods, but he loved to see his church beautiful, and he heartily cared for the poor. To return: Mr. Turner attended the old parish church, and insisted on his family attending it also. Although he looked on his son as a superior, or rather a fancy article, his will was on some points law to the young man, and this was one of them; so it fell out that Mr. Joseph Turner saw Mrs. Temple and Fanny. They had also elected to sit under the rector, a mild, well-bred, indolent old gentleman, who, as the poor people used to say admiringly, “never harmed no one.”

In the animated discussions which ensued respecting the new people at the Berlin Bazaar, Mr. Joseph was unusually silent; and although he frequently took occasion to saunter by the Berlin establishment of an evening in an admirable, London-made, seaside suit, and a cigarette (refinement was his forte!) in his mouth, he never met the new proprietress and her assistant save once, when they were very simply attired, and moving briskly towards the Barmouth Road, evidently bent on a refreshing country walk. As spring advanced, a movement among the more enterprising townfolk to water the street and roadway of the esplanade, culminated in a meeting and a resolution to that effect, which was neatly drawn out on a sheet of foolscap, and ordered to be taken round by some one of the committee to all the principal houses to collect subscriptions. Mr. Turner, senior, as a churchwarden and a representative man, felt that he ought to be first in such an excellent work; but he by no means fancied the undertaking. He was, therefore, doubly gratified when his son volunteered his services—first, because such a mark of interest in mundane affairs was rather rare in the sullen young gentleman; secondly, because it was a personal relief. Thus it came about that just after the early dinner hour, when things were quiet one blazing afternoon in early June, Fanny peeped between the half-worked cushions and slippers, the traced screens and ornamental baskets, that adorned the window, and exclaimed, “Here comes that elegant young man who stares so at us in church!—and, Kate! I protest, he is coming in!”

The next moment Mr. Joseph, in unquestionable attire, was raising his hat with metropolitan grace, as he stood in the centre of the shop, Macassar in his locks, a moss-rose in his button-hole, and a handkerchief redolent of *millefleurs* in his hand.

“A thousand pardons!” he said, in a mild and rather squeaky voice. “I have taken the liberty of calling in the character of a petitioner. Fact is, a number of respectable buffers belonging to this town, my governor among them, have decided on levying—a—contributions for the desirable object of laying the dust, and I have therefore to request you will come down with your dust—if you will excuse that form of address.”

This speech, though carefully conned, and delivered with a certain fluency, cost the speaker no small effort. He was in a violent perspiration before it ended, and,

as usual, the effort to conceal his real bashfulness, of which he was heartily ashamed, made him assume an unnecessarily brazen front. As he paused, he drew forth from a breast-pocket and presented to Mrs. Temple the foolscap aforesaid. She received it with a gracious bow and smile, proceeding to peruse it before committing herself to speech. While she did so, Mr. Joseph addressed some remarks on the weather to Fanny, in much less an audacious tone than that in which he began. That volatile little lady, infinitely amused by the young man's air of fashion and elaborate elegance, replied with much suavity, quite running over with smiles.

"A very necessary undertaking," said Mrs. Temple, interrupting their conversation, as she finished perusing the "resolution." "I shall be most happy to contribute;" and, drawing forth her purse, she returned the paper with a smile and a half-sovereign.

"Very handsome indeed," observed her visitor, "for a new-comer."

"But I hope to be long reckoned among the townsfolk," returned Mrs. Temple.

"If I may be considered in any way representing Pierstoffe," replied Mr. Joseph, gallantly, but not without a tinge of self-importance, "I should say the town is honoured by the addition of two such ladies to its residents. Perhaps," he went on, half-jest, half-earnest, "I may one of these days be its Parliamentary representative — who knows! — the age of progress, you know; a — impossible to say what it may lead to. As strangers, you may not be aware that my father's Mr. Turner, of the emporium, ma'am — is the oldest-established firm in the place, except Prodgers, the grocer; but then the difference of position is enormous! My governor is desperately fond of the concern, though there is really no necessity for his working it. Were the choice left to me —" A graceful flourish of his perfumed handkerchief, and the rest was left to imagination.

"Does Pierstoffe return a member to Parliament?" asked Mrs. Temple, a little puzzled how to reply, and seizing the only point of general interest in his speech.

"Not as yet," said the future M.P., lifting and re-arranging his hat on his Macassar curls. "The narrow-minded agriculturists, who absorb Parliamentary powers, have as yet ignored the growing — I may say the fast-growing — claims of this rising town. Nevertheless, the hour

is coming — perhaps the man will not be wanting."

Mrs. Temple generally hoped all possible success to that mysterious individual.

Still Mr. Turner lingered. He talked of "town" with an air of exhaustive knowledge, and strove, though not very persistently, to ascertain if they were Londoners. Fanny's knowledge of what had been going on at the theatres six months before fixed her *locale*; but Mrs. Temple was impervious, and, to a point-blank inquiry, replied, as was her habit now —

"I have lived in London, but I came last from France."

This reply, coupled with an admission that her husband dealt in Eastern produce, gave rise to a generally-received theory that the late Mr. Temple had been in the grocery line, in a large way; had failed; had fled to France to escape his creditors and get brandy cheap, as he took to drink, and, after inflicting much suffering on his wife, died and left her in the direst poverty. Her friends and Miss Lee's had bought the "Berlin Bazaar" and set them up — the money was chiefly Miss Lee's. She came of a high family in some mysterious way — the natural daughter of an earl — of a marchioness — of a general officer. It was easy to see *she* was unaccustomed to business, and the most independent of the two, etc., etc.

Meantime, Mr. J. Turner, jun., as was printed on his cards, which had led to his being familiarly styled J. T. J., posed and talked till, to Mrs. Temple's relief, the entrance of some customers obliged him to retire; not, however, before he expressed a hope on the part of the ladies of his family, which they had not authorized him to do, that on some suitable occasion they might become acquainted with Mrs. Temple and her friend.

So gradually the widow found herself drawn into social relations with her fellows. She accepted their advances with a frankness that proved her best safeguard against intrusion, as what seems within the grasp is never too eagerly sought. But the only intimacy she found was with the chemist's wife — a gentlewoman by nature, but "sair hauden doon" by a large and ever-increasing family. To her Mrs. Temple and her friend were real "God-sends;" so much help, refreshment, and courage did she glean from her kindly and congenial neighbours.

Thus the first months of their life at Pierstoffe rolled over for Kate Travers and her friend.

From The Cornhill Magazine.
ROBERT HERRICK.

It is told of Mahommed that when the political economists of the day provoked him by the narrowness of their utilitarian schemes, he was wont to silence them with these words: "If a man has two loaves of bread, let him exchange one for some flowers of the narcissus, for bread only nourishes the body, but to look on the narcissus feeds the soul." Robert Herrick was one of the few who have been content to carry out this precept, and to walk through life with a little bread in the one hand, and in the other a bunch of golden flowers. With an old serving-woman in a tumble-down country parsonage his life passed merrily among such dreams as oriental sultans wear themselves out to realize, and his figure stands out in front of the shining ranks of his contemporaries as that around which most vividly of all there flashes the peculiar light "which never was on sea or land." He may be well contrasted with a man whose native genius was probably exceedingly like his own, but whose life was as brilliant and eventful as Herrick's was retired, namely, Sir John Suckling. The wit, fire, and exuberant imagination that interpenetrated both found scope in the life of one and in the works of the other; Suckling's poems are strangely inadequate to represent his genius and fame; Herrick, on the other hand, may be taken almost as the typical poet, the man who, if not a lyrist, would be nothing, the bird-like creature whose only function was to sing in a cage of trammelling flesh. There are many features in his career, besides the actual excellence of his verse, which make him an object of peculiar interest. Among the pure poets he occupies the most prominent position in the school that flourished after Ben Jonson and before Milton, and though his life was of immense duration—he was born before Marlowe died, and died after the birth of Addison—his actual period of production covers the comparatively small space occupied by the reign of Charles I. This period was one of great lyrical ability; the drama was declining under Massinger and Shirley, and all the young generation of poets, brought up at the feet of Jonson and Fletcher, were much more capable of writing songs than plays. Indeed, no one can at this time determine what degree of technical perfection the English literature might not have attained if the royalist lyrists had been allowed to sun themselves unmolested about the fountains of White-

hall, and, untroubled by the grave questions of national welfare, had been able to give their whole attention to the polishing of their verses. In fact, however, it will be noticed that only one of the whole school was undisturbed by the political crisis. The weaker ones, like Lovelace, were completely broken by it; the stronger, like Suckling, threw themselves into public affairs with a zeal and intensity that supplied the place of the artificial excitements of poetry so completely as to put a stop to their writing altogether. Herrick alone, with imperturbable serenity, continued to pipe out his pastoral ditties, and crown his head with daffodils, when England was torn to pieces with the most momentous struggle for liberty that her annals can present. To the poetic student he is, therefore, of especial interest, as a genuine specimen of an artist, pure and simple. Herrick brought out the "*Hesperides*" a few weeks before the king was beheaded, and people were invited to listen to little madrigals upon Julia's stomacher at the singularly inopportune moment when the eyes of the whole nation were bent on the unprecedented phenomenon of the proclamation of an English republic. To find a parallel to such unconsciousness we must come down to our own time, and recollect that Théophile Gautier took occasion of the siege of Paris to revise and republish "*Emaux et Camées*."

Herrick was born in London, in "the golden Cheapside," in August 1591, and all we can guess about his childhood is to be picked up in one of his own confidential pieces about himself, where he speaks with intense delight of his early life by the river-side, going to bathe in the "summer's sweeter evenings" with crowds of other youths, or gliding with pomp in a barge, with the young ladies of the period, "soft-smooth virgins," up as far as Richmond, Kingston, and Hampton Court. In the same poem he speaks of his "beloved Westminster," from which allusion it has been illogically imagined that he was at school there. The first certain fact in his life is that in 1607 he was apprenticed to his uncle, the rich goldsmith of Wood Street, with whom one may presume that he remained until 1615, when we find him entered as fellow-commoner of St. John's College, Cambridge. His London life, therefore, closed when his age was twenty-four, and his acquaintance with literary life in the metropolis must have come to rapid development within the eight years of his apprenticeship. Speculation in this

case is not so vain as usual. If any fact about Herrick be certain, it is that he sat at the feet of Ben Jonson; the poems of rapturous admiration and reverence that abound in the "Hesperides" set this beyond question. In one piece, it will be remembered, he speaks, with passion unusual to him, of the old days when Ben Jonson's plays were brought out at the London theatres, and gives us an important date by describing the unfavourable reception of the "Alchemist," much as a poet of the Romanticism would have described the reception of "Hernani" for the first time at the Théâtre Français. But the "Alchemist" was brought out in 1610, when our poet was nineteen years old, and it was received with great excitement as an innovation. We may well believe that the young apprentice, fired with enthusiasm for the great poet, distinguished himself by the loudness and truculence of his applause, and claimed the privilege of laying his homage afterwards at the author's feet. Nineteen years later exactly the same thing was done by a younger generation, when Carew, Randolph, and Cleaveland made a riot at the damning of the "New Inn," and then laid their lyric worship at the grand old poet's feet. Jonson loved to receive such homage, and to pose as the poet of the age; in fact, we cannot be too often reminded that to the intellectual public of that day he took exactly the same regal position among his contemporaries that we unanimously accord to Shakespeare. Taking for granted that Herrick became a familiar member of Jonson's circle about 1610, we must suppose him to have witnessed in succession the first performances of "Catiline" and of "Bartholomew Fair," and to have known the poet of the "mountain belly and the rocky face" at the very height of his creative power. More important for us, however, as being far more in unison with the tastes and genius of Herrick, are the masques which Jonson was engaged upon at this time. It is very strange that no writer upon the poetry of that age has noticed what an extraordinary influence the masques of Ben Jonson had upon Herrick. We have seen that he must have become acquainted with that poet in 1610. It is more than remarkable to notice that it was in this year that Jonson produced "Oberon, the Fairy Prince," a beautiful masque that contains the germs of many of Herrick's most fantastic fairy-fancies. "The Masque of Queens," brought out some months earlier, is full of Herrick-like passages about hags and

witches; and we might pursue the parallel much further, did space permit, showing how largely Jonson, on the milder and more lyrical side of his genius, inspired the young enthusiast and pointed out to him the poetic path that he should take. We cannot with equal certainty say that Herrick was acquainted with any other of the great poets. Shakespeare was settled at Stratford, and in London only briefly and at distant intervals; he died at the end of Herrick's first year at Cambridge. Herrick writes of Fletcher thirty years later as though he had known him slightly, and speaks of the power of the "Maid's Tragedy" to make "young men swoon," as though he had seen it at the first performance in 1611. He must have known Jonson's jolly friend Bishop Corbet, who was also a lover of fairy-lore, and he may have known Browne, whose poetry Jonson approved of, and who was then studying in the Inner Temple, and beginning to publish "Britannia's Pastorals." It was probably at this time, and through Ben Jonson, that he became acquainted with Selden, for whose prodigious learning and wit he preserved an extravagant admiration through life. This is as far as we dare to go in speculation; if Herrick, so fond of writing about himself, had found time for a few more words about his contemporaries, we might discover that he had dealings with other interesting men during this period of apprenticeship, but probably his circle was pretty much limited to the personal and intimate friends of Jonson.

In 1615, as we have said, he took up his abode at Cambridge, as a fellow-commoner of St. John's, and here he seems to have remained till 1629. How these fourteen years of early manhood were spent it is now impossible to conjecture. That he became master of arts in 1620 is not so important an item of history as that he was certainly very poor, and in the habit of making a piteous annual appeal to his rich uncle for ten pounds to buy books with. Fourteen of these appeals exist, written in a florid, excited style, with a good many Latin quotations and old-fashioned references to "Apelles ye painter," in the manner of "Euphues"; it is amusing to note that he manages to spell his own surname in six different ways, and not one of them that which is now adopted, on the authority of the title-page of the "Hesperides." There can be no doubt that he began writing in London; it is certain that he was known as a poet at Cambridge. One of the few dates in

the "Hesperides" is 1627, two years before the exodus into Devonshire, and in "Lacrimæ" he says that before he went into exile into the loathèd west

He could rehearse
A lyric verse,
And speak it with the best.

The "Hesperides," in its present state, offers no assistance to us in trying to discover what was written early or late, for nothing is more obvious than that the verses were thrown together without the slightest regard to the chronology of their composition. However, in 1629, he was presented to the living of Dean Prior, near Totnes, in South Devon, and there he remained in quiet retirement until 1648, when he was ejected by the Puritans.

Such is the modest biography of this poet up to the time of the publication of the two books which caused and have retained his great reputation. Fortunately he has himself left copious materials for autobiography in the gossipy pages of his own confidential poems. Glancing down the index to the "Hesperides," one is constantly struck by such titles as "On Himself," "To his Muse," and "His Farewell to Sack," and one is not disappointed in turning to these to collect an impression of the author's individuality. Indeed, few writers of that age appear more vividly in relief than Herrick; the careful student of his poems learns to know him at last as a familiar friend, and every feature of body and mind stands out clearly before the eye of the imagination. He was physically a somewhat gross person, as far as his portraits will enable one to judge, with great quantities of waving or curling black hair, and a slight black moustache; the eyebrows distinct and well-arched, the upper lip short, the nose massive and Roman. In the weighty points of the face, especially in the square and massive under-jaw, there is much of the voluptuous force of the best type among the Roman emperors; and bearing these features well in mind, it becomes easy to understand how it was that Herrick came to write so much that an English gentleman, not to say clergyman, had better have left unsaid. His temperament was scarcely clerical.

I fear no earthly powers,
But care for crowns of flowers;
And love to have my beard
With wine and oil besmeared.
This day I'll drown all sorrow;
Who knows do live to-morrow?

This was his philosophy, and it is not to be distinguished from that of Anacreon or Horace. One knows not how the old pagan dared to be so outspoken in his dreary Devonshire vicarage, with no wild friends to egg him on or to applaud his fine frenzy. His epicureanism was plainly a matter of conviction, and though he wrote "Noble Numbers," preached sermons, and went through all the perfunctory duties of his office, it is not in these that he lives and has his pleasure, but in half-classical dreams about Favonius and Isis, and in flowery mazes of sweet thoughts about fair, half-imaginary women. It matters little to him what divinity he worships, if he may wind daffodils into the god's bright hair. In one hand he brings a garland of yellow flowers for the amorous head of Bacchus, with the other he decks the osier cradle of Jesus with roses and Lent-lilies. He has no sense of irreverence in this rococo devotion. It is the attribute and not the deity he worships. There is an airy frivolity, an easy-going callousness of soul that makes it impossible for him to feel very deeply. There is a total want of passion in his language about women — the nearest approach to it, perhaps, is in the wonderful song "To Anthea," where the lark-like freshness of the ascending melody closely simulates intense emotion — with all his warmth of fancy and luxurious animalism, he thinks more of the pretty eccentricities of dress than the charms the garments contain. He is enraptured with the way in which the Countess of Carlisle wears a riband of black silk twisted round her arm; he palpitates with pleasure when Mistress Katherine Bradshaw puts a crown of laurel on his head, falling on one knee, we may believe, and clasping his hands as he receives it. He sees his loves through the medium of shoestrings and pomander bracelets, and is alive, as no poet has been before or since, to the picturesqueness of dress. Everybody knows his exquisite lines about the "tempestuous petticoat," and his poems are full of little touches no less delicate than this. Only two things make him really serious: one is his desire of poetic fame. Every lyric he writes he considers valuable enough to be left as a special legacy to some prime friend. He is eager to die before the world; to pass away like Pindar, garlanded and clasped in the arms of love, while the theatre resounds with plaudits. His thirst for fame is insatiable, and his confidence of gaining it intense. His poesy is "his hope and his pyramides," a living pillar "ae'er to

be thrown down by envious time," and it shall be the honour of great musicians to set his pieces to music when he is dead. When he is dead! That has a saddening sound! Life was meant to last forever, and it makes him angry to think of death. He rings his head about with roses, clasps Julia to his arms, and will defy death. Yet, if death should come, as he sometimes feels it must, he is not unmindful of what his end should be. No thoughts of a sad funeral or the effrontery of a Christian burial oppress him; he cannot think even of dismal plumes or of a hearse. He will be wound in one white robe, and borne to a quiet garden-corner, where the over-blown roses may shower petals on his head, and, where, when the first primrose blossoms, Perilla may remember him, and come to weep over his dust:

Then shall my ghost not walk about, but keep
Still in the cool and silent shades of sleep.

He was never married; he explains over and over again that he values his liberty far too highly to give it into any woman's hands, and lived in the country, as it would seem, with no company save that of an excellent old servant, Prudence Baldwin. In many sweet and sincere verses he gives us the charming picture of the quiet life he led in the Devonshire parsonage that he affected to loathe so much. The village had its rural and semipagan customs, that pleased him thoroughly. He loved to see the brown lads and lovely girls, crowned with daffodils and daisies, dancing in the summer evenings in a comely country round; he delighted in the maypole, ribanded and garlanded like a thyrsus, reminding his florid fancy of Bacchus and the garden god. There were morris-dances at Dean Prior, wakes and quintels; mummers, too, at Christmas, and quaint revellings on Twelfth Night, with wassail-bowls and nut-brown mirth; and we can imagine with what zeal the good old pagan would encourage these rites against the objections of any roundhead Puritan who might come down with his new-fangled Methodistical notions to trouble the sylvan quiet of Dean Prior. For Herrick the dignity of episcopal authorship had no charm, and thunders of Nonconformity no terror. Busier minds were at this moment occupied with "Holy Living and Holy Dying," and thrilled with "The Sermons of Calamy." It is delightful to think of Herrick, blissfully unconscious of the tumult of tongues and all the windy war, more occupied with morris-dances and

barley-breaks than with prayer-book or psalter. The Revolution must indeed have come upon him unaware.

Herrick allowed himself to write a great deal of nonsense about his many mistresses. It was the false Anacreontic spirit of the day, and a worse offender was in the field, even Abraham Cowley, who, never having had the courage to speak of love to a single woman, was about to publish, in 1648, a circumstantial account of his affairs with more than one-and-twenty mistresses. It is not easy to determine how much of Herrick's gallantry is as imaginary as this. We may dismiss Perilla, Silvia, Anthea, and the rest at once, as airy nothings, whom the poet created for the sake of hanging pretty amorous fancies on their names; but Julia is not so ephemeral or so easily disposed of. She may well be supposed to have died or passed away before Herrick left Cambridge. All the poet's commentators seem to have forgotten how old he was before he retired to that country vicarage where they rightly enough perceive that the presence of a Julia was impossible. When we recollect that he did not enter holy orders till he was thirty-eight, we may well believe that Julia ruled his youth, and yet admit his distinct statement with regard to his clerical life that

Jocund his muse was, but his life was chaste.

We have a minute chronicle of Julia's looks and ways in the "Hesperides," and they bear a remarkable air of truth about them. She is presented to us as a buxom person, with black eyes, a double chin, and a strawberry-cream complexion. Her attire, as described by our milliner poet, is in strict accordance with the natural tastes of a woman of this physical nature. She delights in rich silks and deep-coloured satins; on one occasion she wears a dark blue petticoat, starred with gold, on another she ravishes her poet lover by the glitter and vibration of her silks as she takes her stately walks abroad. Her hair, despite her dark eyes, is bright and dewy, and the poet takes a fantastic pleasure in tiring and braiding it. An easy, kindly woman, we picture her ready to submit to the fancies of her lyric lover, pleased to have roses on her head, still more pleased to perfume herself with storax, spikenard, galbanum, and all the other rich gums he loved to smell, dowered with so much refinement of mind as was required to play fairly on the lute, and to govern a wayward poet with tact, not so modest or so sensitive as to resent the grossness of his

fancy, yet respectable enough and determined enough to curb his license at certain times. She bore him one daughter, it seems, to whom he addressed one of his latest poems, and one of his tamest.

But it is time to turn from the poet to his work, from Julia to the "Hesperides" that she inspired. They are songs, children of the West, brought forth in the soft, sweet air of Devonshire. And the poet strikes a key-note with wonderful sureness in the opening couplets of the opening poem :—

I sing of books, of blossoms, birds and bowers,
Of April, May, of June and July flowers.
I sing of maypoles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal cakes.

It would not have been easy to describe more correctly what he does sing of. The book is full of all those pleasant things of spring and summer, full of young love, happy nature, and the joy of mere existence. As far as flowers are concerned, the atmosphere is full of them. One is pelted with roses and daffodils from every page, and no one dares enter the sacred precincts without a crown of blossoms on his hair. Herrick's muse might be that strange Venus of Botticelli's who rises, rosy and dewy, from a sparkling sea, blown at by the little laughing winds, and showered upon with violets and lilies of no earthly growth. He tells us that for years and years his muse was content to stay at home, or, straying from village to village, to pipe to handsome young shepherds and girls of flower-sweet breath, but that at last she became ambitious to try her skill at court, and so came into print in London. In other words, these little poems circulated widely in manuscript long before they were published. They are not all of the bird and blossom kind, unhappily; the book is fashioned, as we shall presently see, closely upon the model of the epigrams of Martial; and as there the most delicate and jewel-like piece of sentiment rubs shoulders with a coarse and acrid quatrain of satire, so has Herrick shuffled up odes, epithalamia, epigrams, occasional verses and canzonets, in glorious confusion, without the slightest regard to subject, form, or propriety. There are no less than 1,231 distinct poems in the book, many of them, of course, only two lines long. There are too many "epigrams," as he called them, scraps of impersonal satire in the composition of which he followed Ben Jonson, who had followed Martial. These little

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couplets and quatrains are generally very gross, very ugly, and very pointless; they have, sometimes, a kind of broad Pantagruelist humour about them which has its merit, but it must be confessed even of these that they greatly spoil the general complexion of the book. More worthy of attention in every way are the erotic lyrical pieces which fortunately abound, and which are unrivalled in our literature for their freshness and tender beauty. They are interpenetrated with strong neo-pagan emotion; had they been written a century earlier they would be called the truest English expression of the passion of the Renaissance. This is, however, what they really are. Late in the day as they made their appearance, they were as truly an expression of the delirious return to the freedom of classical life and enjoyment as the Italian paintings of the fifteenth or the French poetry of the sixteenth century. The tone of the best things in the "Hesperides" is precisely the same as that which permeates the wonderful designs of the "Hypnerotomachia." In Herrick's poems, as in that mysterious and beautiful romance, the sun shines on a world re-arisen to the duty of pleasure; Bacchus rides through the valleys, with his leopards and his maidens and his ivy-rods; loose-draped nymphs, playing on the lyre, bound about the foreheads with vervain and the cool stalks of parsley, fill the silent woods with their melodies and dances; this poet sings of a land where all the men are young and strong, and all the women lovely, where life is only a dream of sweet delights of the bodily senses. The "Hesperides" is an astounding production when one considers when it was written, and how intensely grave the temper of the age had become. But Herrick hated sobriety and gravity, and distinguished very keenly between the earnestness of art and the austerity of religion. Here he lays down his own canons :—

In sober mornings, do not thou rehearse
The holy incantation of a verse;
But when that men have both well drunk and
fed,
Let my enchantments then be sung or read.
When laurel spirits in the fire, and when the
hearth
Smiles to itself, and gilds the roof with mirth,
When up the thyrse is raised, and when the
sound
Of sacred orgies flies around, around,
When the rose rains, and locks with ointments
shine,
Let rigid Cato read these lines of mine.

At such moments as these Herrick is in-

spired above a mortal pitch, and listens to the great lyre of Apollo with the rapture of a prophet. From a very interesting poem, called "The Apparition of his Mistress calling him to Elysium," we quote a few lines that exemplify at the same moment his most ideal condition of fancy and the habitual oddities of his style. This is the landscape of the Hesperides, the golden isles of Herrick's imagination:—

Here in green meadows sits eternal May,
Purpling the margents, while perpetual day
So doubly gilds the air, as that no night
Can ever rust the enamel of the light.
Here naked younglings, handsome striplings,
run
Their goals for maidens' kisses, which when
done,
Then unto dancing forth the learned round
Commixt they meet, with endless roses
crowned;
And here we'll sit on primrose-banks, and see
Love's chorus led by Cupid.

But although he lived in this ideal scenery, he was not entirely unconscious of what actually lay around him. He was the earliest English poet to see the picturesqueness of homely country life, and all his little landscapes are exquisitely precious. No one has ever known better than Herrick how to seize, without effort and yet to absolute perfection, the pretty points of modern pastoral life. Of all these poems of his none surpasses "Corinna's going a-Maying," which has something of Wordsworth's faultless instinct and delicate perception. The picture given here of the slim boys and the girls in green gowns going out singing into the corridors of blossoming whitethorn, when the morning sky is radiant in all its "fresh-quilted colours," is ravishing, and can only be compared for its peculiar charm with that other where the maidens are seen at sunset, with silvery naked feet and dishevelled hair crowned with honeysuckle, bearing cowslips home in wicket-baskets. Whoever will cast his eye over the pages of the "Hesperides," will meet with myriads of original and charming passages of this kind:—

Like to a solemn sober stream
Bankt all with lilies, and the cream
Of sweetest cowslips filling them,

the "cream of cowslips" being the rich yellow anthers of the water-lilies. Or this, comparing a bride's breath to the faint, sweet odour of the earth:—

A savour like unto a blessed field,
When the bedabbled morn
Washes the golden ears of corn.

Or this, a sketched interior:—

Yet can thy humble roof maintain a choir
Of singing crickets by the fire,
And the brisk mouse may feed herself with
crumbs,

Till that the green-eyed kitling comes.

Nor did the homeliest details of the household escape him. At Dean Prior his clerical establishment consisted of Prudence Baldwin, his ancient maid, of a cock and hen, a goose, a tame lamb, a cat, a spaniel, and a pet pig, learned enough to drink out of a tankard; and not only did the genial vicar divide his loving attention between the various members of this happy family, but he was wont, a little wantonly one fears, to gad about to wakes and wassailings, and to increase his popular reputation by showing off his marvellous learning in old rites and ceremonies. These he has described with loving minuteness, and not these only, but even the little arts of cookery do not escape him. Of all his household poems not one is more characteristic and complete than "The Bride-cake," which we remember having had recited to us years ago with immense gusto, at the making of a great pound cake, by a friend now widely enough known as a charming follower of Herrick's poetic craft:—

THE BRIDE-CAKE.

This day, my Julia, thou must make
For Mistress Bride the wedding-cake;
Knead but the dough, and it will be
To paste of almonds turned by thee,
Or kiss it, thou, but once or twice,
And for the bride-cake there'll be spice.

There is one very curious omission in all his descriptions of nature, in that his landscapes are without background; he is photographically minute in giving us the features of the brook at our feet, the farmyard and its inmates, the open fireplace and the chimney corner, but there is no trace of anything beyond, and the beautiful distances of Devonshire, the rocky tors, the rugged line of Dartmoor, the glens in the hills—of all these there is not a trace. In this he contrasts curiously with his contemporary William Browne, another Devonshire poet, whose pictures are infinitely vaguer and poorer than Herrick's, but who has more distance, and who succeeds in giving a real notion of Devonian rock and moor, which Herrick never so much as suggests. In short, it may be said, perhaps, that Herrick made for himself an Arcadian world, in the centre of which the ordinary daily life of a country parish went contentedly on, surrounded by an imagi-

nary land of pastoral peace and plenty, such as England can hardly have been then in the eyes of any other mortal, unless in those of the French poet St. Amant, who came over to the court at Whitehall just before the rebellion broke out, while Herrick was piping at Dean Prior, and who on his return wrote a wonderfully fulsome ode to their serenest Majesties Charles and Mary, in which he took precisely the same view of our island as Herrick did:—

Oui, c'est ce pays bienheureux
Qu'avec des regards amoureux
Le reste du monde contemple;
C'est cette île fameuse où tant d'aventuriers
Et tant de beautés sans exemple
Joignent autrefois les myrtes aux lauriers!

St. Amant lived to alter his opinion, and hurl curses at the unconscious Albion; but to Herrick the change came too late, and when the sunshine ceased to warn him, he simply ceased to sing, as we shall see.

The epithalamium is a form of verse which had a very brief period of existence in England, and which has long been completely extinct. Its theme and manner gave too much opportunity to lavish adulation on the one hand, and unseemly inuendo on the other, to suit the precisers' manners of our more reticent age, but it flourished for the brief period contained between 1600 and 1650, and produced some exquisite masterpieces. The "Epithalamion" and "Prothalamion" of Spenser struck the key-note of a fashion that Drayton, Ben Jonson, and others adorned, and of which Herrick was the last and far from the least ardent votary. His confidential muse was delighted at being asked in to arrange the ceremonies of a nuptial feast, and described the bride and her surroundings with a world of pretty extravagance. Every admirer of Herrick should read the "Nuptial Ode on Sir Clipseby Crew and his Lady." It is admirably fanciful, and put together with consummate skill. It opens with a choral outburst of greeting to the bride:—

What's that we see from far? the spring of day
Bloom'd from the east, or fair enjewelled May
Blown out of April? or some new
Star filled with glory to our view
Reaching at heaven,
To add a nobler planet to the seven?

Less and less dazzled, he declares her to be some goddess floating out of Elysium in a cloud of tiffany. She leaves the church treading upon scarlet and amber, and spicing the chafed air with fumes of

Paradise. Then they watch her coming towards them down the shining street, whose very pavement breathes out spikenard. But who is this that meets her? Hymen, with his fair white feet, and head with marjoram crowned, who lifts his torch, and, behold, by his side the bridegroom stands, flushed and ardent. Then the maids shower them with shamrock and roses, and so the dreamy verses totter under their load of perfumed words, till they close with a benediction over the new-married couple, and a peal of maiden laughter over love and its flower-like mysteries.

Once more, before we turn to more general matters, there is one section of the "Hesperides" that demands a moment's attention, that, namely, devoted to descriptions of fairyland and its inhabitants. We have seen that it was, probably, the performance of Ben Jonson's pretty masque of "Oberon" that set Herrick dreaming about that misty land where elves sit eating butterflies' horns round little mushroom tables, or quaff draughts

Of pure seed-pearl of morning dew,
Brought and besweetened in a blue
And pregnant violet.

And with him the poetic literature of fairyland ended. He was its last laureate, for the Puritans thought its rites, though so shadowy, superstitious, and frowned upon their celebration, while the whole temper of the Restoration, gross and dandified at the same time, was foreign to such pure play of the imagination. But some of the greatest names of the great period had entered its sacred bounds and sung its praises. Shakespeare had done it eternal honours in "Midsummer Night's Dream," and Drayton had written an elaborate epic, "The Court of Faerie." Jonson's friend Bishop Corbet had composed fairy ballads that had much of Herrick's lightness about them. It was these literary traditions that Herrick carried with him into the west; it does not seem that he collected any fresh information about the mushroom world in Devonshire; we read nothing of river-wraiths or pixies in his poems. He adds, however, a great deal of ingenious fancy to the stores he received from his elders, and his fairy-poems, all written in octosyllabic verse, as though forming parts of one projected work, may be read with great interest as a kind of final compendium of all that the poets of the seventeenth century imagined about fairies.

Appended to the "Hesperides," but

bearing date one year earlier, is a little book of poems, similar to these in outward form, but dealing with sacred subjects. Here our pagan priest is seen, despoiled of his vine-wreath and his thyrsus, doing penance in a white sheet, and with a candle in his hand. That rubicund visage, with its sly eye and prodigious jowl, looks ludicrously out of place in the penitential surplice; but he is evidently sincere, though not very deep, in his repentance, and sings hymns of faultless orthodoxy, with a loud and lusty voice, to the old pagan airs. Yet they are not inspiring reading, save where they are least Christian; there is none of the religious passion of Crashaw, burning the weak heart away in a flame of adoration, none of the sweet and sober devotion of Herbert, nothing, indeed, from an ecclesiastical point of view, so good as the best of Vaughan the Silurist; where the "Noble Numbers" are most readable is where they are most secular. One sees the same spirit here as throughout the worldly poems; in a charming little "Ode to Jesus" he wishes the Saviour to be crowned with roses and daffodils, and laid in a neat white osier cradle; in "The Present," he will take a rose to Christ, and sticking it in His stomach, beg for one "mellifluous kiss." The epigrams of the earlier volume are replaced in the "Noble Numbers" by a series of couplets, attempting to define the nature of God, of which none equals in neatness this, which is the last:—

Of all the good things whatsoever we do
God is the *'Αρχή* and the *Τέλος* too.

As might be expected, his religion is as grossly anthropomorphic as it is possible to be. He almost surpasses those mediæval priests of Picardy who brought such waxen images to the Madonna's shrine as no altar had seen since the cult of the Lampsacene, in certain verses on the circumcision, verses that are more revolting in their grossness than any of those erotic poems—

unbaptised rhymes

Writ in my wild unhallowed times—

for which he so ostentatiously demands absolution. It is pleasant to turn from these to the three or four pieces that are in every way worthy of his genius. Of these the tenderest is the "Thanksgiving," where he is delightfully confidential about his food, thus:—

Lord, I confess, too, when I dine
The pulse is Thine,
And all those other bits, that be
Placed there by Thee;

The worts, the purslain, and the mass
Of water-cress.

'Tis thou that crown'st my glittering hearth
With guiltless mirth,
And giv'st me wassail-bowls to drink,
Spiced to the brink.

And about his house:—

Like as my parlour, so my hall
And kitchen's small,
A little buttery, and therein
A little bin.

The wild and spirited "Litany" is too well known to be quoted here, but there are two very fine odes in the "Noble Numbers" that are hardly so familiar. One is the "Dirge of Jephthah's Daughter," written in a wonderfully musical and pathetic measure, and full of fine passages, of which this is a fair sample:—

May no wolf howl, or screechowl stir
A wing about thy sepulchre!
No boisterous winds or storms come hither
To starve or wither
Thy soft sweet earth, but, like a spring,
Love keep it ever flourishing.

But beyond question the cleverest and at the same time the most odd poem in the "Noble Numbers" is "The Widow's Tears; or, Dirge of Dorcas," a lyrical chorus supposed to be wailed out by the widows over the death-bed of Tabitha. The bereaved ladies disgrace themselves, unfortunately, by the greediness of their regrets, dwelling on the loss to them of the bread—"ay! and the flesh, for and the fish"—that Dorcas was wont to give them; but the poem has stanzas of marvellous grace and delicacy, and the metre in which it is written is peculiarly sweet. But truly Herrick's forte did not lie in hymn-writing, nor was he able to refrain from egregious errors of taste, whenever he attempted to reduce his laughing features to a proper clerical gravity. Of all his solecisms, however, none is so monstrous as one almost incredible poem "To God," in which he gravely encourages the Divine Being to read his secular poems, assuring Him that

Thou, my God, may'st on this impure look,
Yet take no tincture from my sinful book.

For unconscious impiety this rivals the famous passage in which Robert Montgomery exhorted God to "pause and think."

We have now rapidly considered the two volumes on which Herrick claims his place among the best English lyrical poets. Had he written twenty instead of two, he

could not have impressed his strong poetic individuality more powerfully on our literature than he has done in the "Hesperides." It is a storehouse of lovely things, full of tiny beauties of varied kind and workmanship, like a box full of all sorts of jewels, ropes of seed pearl, opals set in old-fashioned shifting settings, antique gilt trifles sadly tarnished by time, here a ruby, here an amethyst, and there a stray diamond, priceless and luminous, flashing light from all its facets and dulling the faded jewellery with which it is so promiscuously huddled. What is so very precious about the book is the originality and versatility of the versification. There is nothing too fantastic for the author to attempt, at least; there is one poem written in rhyming triplets, each line having only two syllables. There are clear little trills of sudden song, like the lines to the "Lark;" there are chance melodies that seem like mere wantonings of the air upon a wind-harp; there are such harmonious endings as this, "To Music:"—

Fall on me like a silent dew,
Or like those maiden showers
Which, by the peep of day, do strew
A baptism o'er the flowers.
Melt, melt my pains
With thy soft strains,
That, having ease me given,
With full delight
I leave this light
And take my flight
For heaven.

With such poems as these, and with the delicious songs of so many of Herrick's predecessors and compeers before them, it is inexplicable upon what possible grounds the critics of the eighteenth century can have founded their astonishing dogma that the first master of English versification was Edmund Waller, whose poems, appearing some fifteen years after the "Hesperides," are chiefly remarkable for their stiff and pedantic movement, and the brazen clang, as of stage armour, of the dreary heroic couplets in which they strut. Where Waller is not stilted he owes his excellence to the very source from which the earlier lyrists took theirs, a study of nature and a free but not licentious use of pure English. But not one of his poems, except "Go, lovely Rose," is worth the slightest of those delicate warbles that Herrick piped out when the sun shone on him and the flowers were fresh.

It is an interesting speculation to consider from what antique sources Herrick, athirst for the pure springs of pagan

beauty, drank the deep draughts of his inspiration. Ben Jonson it was, beyond doubt, who first introduced him to the classics, but his mode of accepting the ideas he found there was wholly his own. In the first place, one must contradict a foolish statement that all the editors of Herrick have repeated, sheep-like, from one another, namely, that Catullus was his great example and model. In the last edition of the "Hesperides" I find the same old blunder: "There is no collection of poetry in our language which more nearly resembles the '*Carmina*' of Catullus." In reality it would be difficult to name a lyric poet with whom he has less in common than with the Veronese, whose eagle-flights into the very noonday depths of passion, swifter than Shelley's, as flaming as Sappho's, have no sort of fellowship with the pipings of our gentle and luxurious babblers by the flowery brooks. In one of his poems, "To Live Merrily," where he addresses the various classical poets, and where, by the way, he tries to work himself into a great exaltation about Catullus, he does not even mention the one that he really took most from of form and colour. No one carefully reading the "Hesperides" can fail to be struck with the extraordinary similarity they bear to the "Epigrams" of Martial, and the parallel will be found to run throughout the writings of the two poets, for good and for bad, the difference being that Herrick is much the more religious pagan of the two, and that he is as much a rural as Martial an urban poet. But in the incessant references to himself and his book, the fondness for gums and spices, the delight in the picturesqueness of private life, the art of making a complete and gem-like poem in the fewest possible lines, the curious mixture of sensitiveness and utter want of sensibility, the trick of writing confidential little poems to all sorts of friends, the tastelessness that mixes up obscene couplets with delicate odes "*De Hortis Martialis*" or "To Anthea;" in all these and many more qualities one can hardly tell where to look for a literary parallel more complete. As far as I know, Herrick mentions Martial but once, and then very slightly. He was fond of talking about the old poets in his verse, but never with any critical cleverness. The best thing he says about any of them is said of Ovid in a pretty couplet. In a dream he sees Ovid lying at the feet of Corinna, who presses

With ivory wrists his laureate head, and steeps
His eyes in dew of kisses while he sleeps.

How much further Herrick's learning proceeded it is difficult to tell. Doubtless he knew some Greek; he mentions Homer and translates from Anacreon. The English poets of that age, learned as many of them were, do not seem to have gone much further than Rome for their inspiration. Chapman is, of course, a great exception. But none of them, as all the great French poets of the Renaissance, went directly to the Anthology, Theocritus and Anacreon. Perhaps Herrick had read the Planudian Anthology; the little piece called "Leander's Obsequies" seems as though it must be a translation of the epigram of Antipater of Thessalonica. Curious to reflect that at the very time that the "Hesperides" was printed, Salmasius, soon to be hunted to death by the implacable hatred of Milton, was carrying about with him in his restless wanderings the MS. of his great discovery, the inestimable Anthology of Constantine Cephalas. One imagines with what sympathetic brotherliness the vicar of Dean Prior would have gossiped and glowed over the new storehouse of Greek song. That the French poets of the century before were known to Herrick is to me extremely doubtful. One feels how much there was in such a book as "*Le Bergerie*" of Remy Belleau, in which our poet would have felt the most unfeigned delight, but I find no distinct traces of their style in his; and unless the Parisian editions of the classics influenced him, I cannot think that he brought any honey, poisonous or other, from France. His inspiration was Latin; that of Rousard and Jodelle essentially Greek. It was the publication of the Anthology in 1531, and of Henri Estienne's "Anacreon" in 1554, that really set the pleiad in movement, and founded *Pécolo gallo-grecque*. It was the translation of Ovid, Lucan, Seneca, and Virgil that gave English Elizabethan poetry the startword.

To return to Herrick, there is not much more to say. He had sung all the songs he had to sing in 1648, being then fifty-seven years of age. He came up to London when the Puritans ejected him from his living, and seems to have been sprightly enough at first over the pleasant change to London life. Soon, however, bad times came. So many friends were gone; Jonson was dead, and Fletcher; Selden was very old and in disgrace. It was poor work solacing himself with Sir John Denham, and patronizing that precocious lad Charles Cotton; and by-and-by the Puritans cut off his fifths, and poor old Her-

rick is vaguely visible to us in poor lodgings somewhere in Westminster, supported by the charity of relations. In 1660 some one or other graciously recollected him, and he was sent back in his seventieth year to that once detested vicarage in "rocky Devonshire," which must now have seemed a kind asylum for his old age. There is something extremely pathetic in the complete obscurity of the poet's last days. In those troublesome times his poetry, after a slight success, passed completely out of all men's minds. The idiotic Winstanley, in his "Lives of the most Famous English Poets," written shortly after Herrick's death, says that "but for the interruption of trivial passages, he might have made up none of the worst poetic landscapes." This is the last word spoken, as I think, on Herrick, till Mr. Nichols revived his fame in 1796. All we know of his latest years is summed up in one short extract from the church-register of Dean Prior. "Robert Herrick, vicker, was buried ye 15th day of October, 1674." By that time a whole new world was formed in poetry. Milton was dead; Wycherley and Dryden were the fashionable poets; Addison and Swift were lately born; next year the "Pilgrim's Progress" was to appear; all things were preparing for that bewigged and bepowdered seventeenth century, with its mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease, its Augustan self-sufficiency, and its horror of nature; and what wonder that no one cared whether Herrick were alive or dead?

E. W. G.

From The Cornhill Magazine.

THE SCEPTIC: A TALE OF MARRIED LIFE.

I.

MIDDAY mass being ended in the church of St. Wolfram, of the town of A—, the holy building was emptied of all its worshippers, excepting some twenty ladies, who grouped themselves on rush chairs near the different confessionals. It was a Friday, and there were consequently no weddings. The penitents had the church all to themselves, and the solemn silence was eminently suited to pious meditation. However, the penitents being for the most part old spinsters, preferred to chatter in whispers; confession was to them a refreshing break in the week's solitary idleness, and they made the most of it.

Truth compels one to admit that the ladies were unequally distributed, for not

less than twelve out of the twenty were gathered round the confessional of l'Abbé Mouillot. But you had only to look at this comely priest waddling across the aisle from the sacristy to understand how great a favourite he must needs be. He was plump and rosy, and his silvery hair, which fluffed over his smooth forehead, crowned a face in which dimples and benevolence had an equal part with serenity and playful humour. No man had more indulgence than he for little sins or large ones. His gentle chiding brought greater comfort than the absolution of other priests; and, what is more, he was possessed of inexhaustible patience—hurrying no one, suffering his penitents to disclose their sins in their own way, and only encouraging them with a kindly word when, by a pause of undue length, they seemed to appeal for it. We must decline to entertain the supposition that if l'Abbé Mouillot sat out long confessions so obligingly it was because he dropped off placidly to sleep at their commencement. The abbé having entered his confessional and closed the door, the lady first on the rank stepped out and knelt in one of the lateral boxes, and the remainder, feigning to keep their eyes on their missals, settled down to comfortable tattle.

"That's the colonel's sister," remarked one spinster.

"If she confess but half what is on her conscience, we shall have to wait an hour," mumbled a second, and both tittered.

At this moment the folding doors of the church were softly pushed back, and a feminine form glided towards the holy-water basin. In the dim light of the entrance it could be seen that she was attired with more taste and richness than are usual in country towns, and that she wore a veil. Approaching the confessional, she lifted the veil, and then a murmur of astonishment and curiosity ran round.

"It is Madame Paul d'Arlay!"

"Oh, oh! her husband has renounced the devil then!"

"What can have brought her two leagues to confession? There is a good church enough at St. Riquier."

"And see how flurried she looks! One may guess her two years' honeymoon has been chequered with a cloud at last."

"Dear Madame d'Arlay, how delighted we are to see you looking so fresh and lovely! We hope your dear husband and child are quite well."

The lady thus addressed with evident respect, and for whom all the penitents made way, was the wife of Paul d'Arlay,

one of the greatest of French novelists and playwrights. He had achieved his brilliant reputation when young, and it had increased with every new work he produced, because he wrote little, and for fame, not profit. At forty, having just been elected—some ten years before the customary age—to the French Academy, he had astonished everybody by marrying a pretty dowerless girl of twenty, the daughter of a country gentleman, and since his marriage he had lived a retired life on a little estate which he had bought near St. Riquier. He was so distinguished a man that the families around felt honoured by his settling among them, but it was deemed singular that he should break so completely with Parisian society, which had idolized him, and it was thought stranger still that, sceptic as he was, he should have married into a family remarkable for religious devoutness. Paul d'Arlay was, indeed, considerably more than a sceptic: he had been called the successor of Voltaire. He was an atheist of the aggressive sort, who had never feigned conformity, as most of his countrymen do, but who, like Edmond About, Emile Augier, and Ste. Beuve, had missed no occasion of assailing the Catholic Church with irony and bitterly contemptuous ridicule. Every one of his works had been banned by the Papal Index, much to his amusement, and his last book, published about a year before his marriage, had attained a success of startling proportions, by being denounced in episcopal mandates throughout every diocese in France. It was conceivable that after this a devout Catholic should have given his daughter to Paul d'Arlay, in the hope that marriage might reclaim him; but it was inconceivable that the renowned author should have been impelled to his ill-assorted marriage, unless it were from the fascinations of Aimée Deschamps' pretty face.

People generally accepted this explanation, for Madame d'Arlay's was just one of those faces that turn men's heads. Small and daintily rounded, she had large soft blue eyes, rich and wavy chestnut hair, and an adorable little mouth, over which a sweet smile was always playing like sunlight. There was no particular expression on her features but that of amiability. She looked good and weak; unable to say no, and not very sure whether she ought to say yes. A physiognomist would not have expected intellect from her, and yet it would have surprised anybody to see her do or say anything that was foolish. She was a Frenchwoman to

her finger-tips; dressed and walked well; carried herself without embarrassment or effrontery; had little graces of gesture, glance, and manner, which proved consciousness of always having admiring or critical eyes bent on her; and summed up in her attractive person all the outward perfections of the gentlewoman. She had been agitated on entering the church, but it was good to see how, in the presence of older members of her sex, she at once resumed her composure; gave to each the bow and civil word that was correct, and took her place modestly on the furthest chair to wait her turn.

She would have to wait long if deference for her husband's celebrity, and perhaps inquisitiveness to see how the wife of so eminent a reprobate would demean herself at the tribunal of penitence, had not induced the other ladies to waive their precedence. When the colonel's sister had finished—and to do this lady justice, she had settled her little account with heaven in half an hour—the next lady motioned to Madame d'Arley, and the others ratified this arrangement by polite smirks. Madame d'Arley reddened a little as she accepted the courtesy, but it was manifestly very welcome to her, and gracefully bowing her acknowledgments, she passed into the confessional and dropped on her knees. Then she heaved a sigh.

"Father, it is I, Madame d'Arley," she whispered through the grating. "I told you the other day that I wished to consult you on something very important, and I have taken advantage of my husband being absent on a visit to drive into A——."

"It will give me pleasure to hear you, my daughter," answered the priest's kind voice. "When I last dined at your charming house I noticed that you were preoccupied, but I have been hoping that your little troubles were more imaginary than real."

"Oh, father, they are not little troubles—no woman was ever so unhappy as I am!" moaned Madame d'Arley. "I am devoured by the sin of curiosity; it leaves me no peace; it will make me ill before long if I do not yield to it. Can you fancy that, although I have been married two years, my husband will not allow me to read one of his books!"

"Ah!"

"No, he forbids me. There is not a copy of his works in our house—if friends come to see us, he contrives to change the conversation as soon as it turns on

his writings, and if I question him myself, he closes my lips with a joke. He is so affectionate and gentle that I bore with this for a time, though it cost me many a pang, but latterly we have been visited by that Madame de Marceuil whom you saw at our table the other night—a young widow, very forward and ill-natured, who I am sure wanted to marry Paul, and who takes a delight in making me miserable."

"Come, come, my daughter——"

"Ah, but it's true, else why should she compliment me so tauntingly on not having read my own husband's books? She has an aggravating way about her which makes a woman's blood tingle. She recurs to the subject at all hours; hinting that the books are full of attacks on religion, immoral, abounding in details about Paul's early life; and that my husband and I are both acting very properly, he in forbidding me to read them, I in obeying him. Was there ever a more humiliating position for a wife? So I am to be the only woman in France who is not to know the writings which have made my Paul's reputation, and our boy, who will grow up to glory in his father's name, will pore over books which his mother has never opened! Tell me, father, that I may go and buy the works to read in private, for I feel I am being treated like a child."

Now l'Abbé Mouillot was not one of those priests who creep into houses and lead captive silly women. He was an honest man, who, perhaps because he was a little dull, had never understood that spiritual fervour should impel a priest to put man and wife asunder. He had not read Paul d'Arley's excommunicated books, but had heard of them, and well guessed why their author should object to let such dangerous literature be perused by a young and innocent wife on whom he doted. There are well-meaning priests who would have advised Aimée d'Arley by all means to read the books, and to try persistently to convert her husband, in order that he might write no more like them. But l'Abbé Mouillot knew what perils lurk under such injudicious counsels. He had received courtesy and kindness from Paul d'Arley, respected his honourable character, could not help revering his genius, and the advice which he gave to the author's wife was that of a friend and peace-maker.

"My daughter, your first duty is to obey your husband," he said with gentle firmness. "Admitting that M. d'Arley does not share your faith, our good God has ways of His own for bringing back

his lost sheep, and a wife should be an instrument of happiness in her household, not contention."

"But it is so hard to be told that one's husband has written this and that, and not to be able to join with people in their admiration or rebut their criticisms."

"It is a trial, but wait patiently. Your husband will, no doubt, end by removing his prohibition, and you will be the more contented then for having passed submissively through your ordeal."

"You have no pity for me," murmured Aimée. "It may be years before my husband relents, and Mme. de Marceuil says the books are so interesting!"

"Heigh, there we have it," exclaimed the priest, whose voice betokened that he was smiling. "The serpent has tempted you to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and after exhausting ingenious reasons for succumbing, you are obliged to confess the true one. Go home, my dear daughter, and read in the third chapter of Genesis what the sin of curiosity and disobedience cost our first mother. Your home is a little paradise — see that you do not throw away its tranquil joys."

Mme. d'Arley rose from her knees, looking calm; but her body was in a fever. She had hoped the priest would ratify the sophistries she had formed to justify her in disobeying, and his refusing to do so added to the irritation of her nerves without allaying any of the desires that seethed in her mind. She had been too much petted not to resent any crossing of her wishes as an unkindness, and if it had not been for the sacredness of the spot she would have burst out crying.

The sun was shining gloriously, and the streets were full of midday bustle as she emerged from the church and made her way with quick steps toward the marketplace, where her carriage was waiting. But why, instead of crossing the marketplace, did she abruptly pause and turn, reddening, down a side-street? There was a bookseller's shop a few doors down, and in the window was conspicuously displayed a yellow placard, advertising in red and black letters the "Complete Works of Paul d'Arley, of the French Academy."

There they were, the works — four novels and five plays — in bright new covers, pink and primrose, with titles alluring enough to open the eyes of a blind man.

Aimée's bosom heaved fast, and the throbings of her heart became physically painful. Once — twice she turned away and retraced her steps. The third time a customer was coming out of the shop, and

fancying she was about to enter, stood aside to let her pass; here was the temptation: she seized it and walked in.

"Have you *all* Paul d'Arley's works?"

"Yes, madame; the last editions have just come from Paris."

"I will buy the complete set, please," said Aimée, in a voice that quavered.

II.

"THE ELMS," Paul d'Arley's country-seat — within bowshot of the ancient abbey-town of St. Ricquier, now dwindled into a village — was dignified, like most French country houses, with the title of *château*. It was a pretty, modern mansion, nestling amid clumps of the trees from which the estate derived its name, and surrounded by an expanse of lawn and shrubberies, which was large or small according as you called it garden or park. Mme. d'Arley insisted it was a park; the author styled it *jardinnet* (diminutive garden), and similar contestations went on between them as to the correct appellation of a conservatory and dove-cote, which Aimée was for dubbing orangery and tower respectively, while her incredulous husband submitted that he would take up with those names when the one had produced an orange and the other stood a siege.

Such as it was, Paul d'Arley loved the place well. Those who wondered that he should settle so contentedly in retirement had little knowledge of his character, and less understanding of the satiety which comes of long indulgence in the pleasures of big cities. D'Arley had lived for twenty years in the most brilliant society in Paris — the equal of princes and statesmen, the pet of great ladies, actresses, and artists, the envy of tyros. Few men had enjoyed life as he had, or better deserved to enjoy it; for he had carved his way to fame and fortune without patronage or charlatanry, by mere dint of hard toil and talent. Every work he had produced, whether novel or play, had cost him more than two years' reflection and assiduous labour; and lest this should seem strange to fertile literary manufacturers in these our times, it may be added that d'Arley had received repeated offers of large sums to work faster, but had declined, alleging rather scornfully that he would print nothing that could not be bequeathed to posterity.

To do his country neighbours justice, there was little in the great author's works to encourage a belief that he would ever develop into a family man; for he had been

a contemner of marriage. He had, in fact, derided most things which the simple reverence. Taking exceptional, and often morbid, passions for his texts, he had employed the resources of incomparable style, masterly perception of character, dramatic power and descriptive facility unrivalled, to defend — nay extol — offences against what the world terms morals, and he social prejudices. France is the only country where theories such as his durst be published, and even Frenchmen, so tolerant of startling paradoxes, would not have brooked from an author of less genius philosophy so deliberately cynical and axioms insultingly launched against all the conventions that hold society together. What saved Paul d'Arley was, next to his talent, his evident good faith, and for this reason no one would have applied an epithet of reprobation to his works. They were books over which thinkers pondered, and which *dilettanti* studied as splendid works of art. But to the vulgar they were poison, and D'Arley knew this so well that from the day of his marriage he had taken the most careful precaution that his wife should not read them.

For the truth is, he deeply loved his fair young wife. After draining the intoxicating cup of worldly excitements he had discovered that there is in domestic happiness a greater joy than all, and he was sincerely grateful to the woman who had revealed this to him. Her gods were not his, but in the practices of her innocent devotions he found a secret charm stirring the innermost chords of his heart. When she knelt down to say her prayers at night, and invoke blessings on his head — when she set out in cold or rain to church, or conformed to the laws of her religion as to fasting — when he saw her act at all times as if an invisible eye were controlling her conduct, it was as if some beautiful scene of poetical legendry were being performed before him. She did not know how often he shaded his eyes to watch her making the sign of the cross, nor divine what was passing in his mind when he would sit down beside her, and, taking her hands in his, ask her to relate him some stories from her Bible. He did not believe in these things. To him they were fables, silly or sublime; but not for the world would he have shaken his wife's faith in them; and gradually there had grown up in him a feeling that he would rather his son, and any other children he might have, should grow up to be God-fearing like their mother than infidels like himself. He looked forward to an age when mankind should be guided

wholly by reason; but felt that this age had not yet come — for his wife.

So he lived happy, falsifying all conjectures, puzzling every observer. He was a handsome man, rather above the middle height, a little bald and shortsighted, but constitutionally strong, thanks to regular diet and exercise. With his waxed moustache, high forehead, and firm chin he looked like a soldier. His face teemed with expression, but the expression was not soft, for like all men who have been much criticised he was a trifle arrogant, and the easy rapidity of his rise in life made him speak with too much contempt of those who had been less fortunate than himself. He would not admit that he owed anything to exceptional abilities. He said it was only hard work that had made him; and one of his grievances against religion was that it taught men to rely on idle supplications rather than on the courageous self-exertions which he for his own part had found enough to conquer all difficulties. It was not surprising that such a man should have earned a character for hardness and pride, and yet never did a man yield himself more good-humouredly to the domination of a young wife. His tenderness, playful gentleness, and cheerful submission to all her wishes were things to see; the little woman had wholly subjugated him, and not until two years after his marriage did he leave her for a single day. It was a summons to the bedside of a relative who was thought to be dying which had induced him very reluctantly to quit her at last, and which had also afforded Aimée the opportunity of going to A — and buying his books, as we have seen. Paul d'Arley had counted on being away three days; he was compelled to remain absent more than three weeks, and when he was at last free to return he travelled back to St. Ricquier with a yearning impatience to resume the peaceful life to which this brief interruption had but added new charms.

But he had no sooner set foot in his house than he perceived some great change had occurred.

It was Ash-Wednesday, and Paul, as he journeyed in the train, had been telling himself with pathetic amusement that he should find his wife in a black dress — for like a good Catholic she wore dark attire on fast days — and be regaled with a fish dinner. But Aimée came to the door and met him, tricked out in silks and colours, and with her hair piled up in some extraordinary Parisian fashion. There was more of the woman, less of the wife and

mother in her, and she seemed excited, though her greeting was gushingly affectionate. When Paul went up-stairs to change his dress, he noticed in passing through his wife's room that the crucifix which used to hang over the bed had been removed, but thinking it might be in repair he paid little attention. When, however, on coming down-stairs he found the dining-room ablaze with wax candles, the table decked with flowers, and a prettily written *menu* of rich dainties lying beside his glass, he was astonished and glanced at Aimée. She was sitting red and nervous, as if playing a part.

"My dear child, you must have mislaid your almanack," he said, smiling. "This is a fast-day."

"Yes, dear, I know it is," replied Aimée, in a voice that slightly trembled.

"Well, but we shall both be excommunicated together. Has our good bishop given you an indulgence?"

"What need of indulgences, Pau? I agree with you that it is time women shook off the superstitions which pervert all enjoyment of the good things of life into sins."

There was a moment's silence. Paul d'Arley had turned white as the tablecloth, and motioned to the servant to retire.

"I am not aware that I ever told you that, Aimée."

"No, but you have written it—and oh, Paul, don't be angry with me, but I have been reading all your books!" she crossed the room, and threw herself at his feet, embracing him with both her arms and gazing into his face with endearing entreaty. "I could not resist any longer, darling, and I know now why you kept your writings from me, fearing I should be too childish to understand them. But do not dread that. Some of the things frightened me at first and made me cry, but as I went on reading the scales dropped off my eyes. Oh, how silly you must have thought me with my little mummeries and foolish creeds—but you are so great, noble, and good, and never let me see what you thought in your tender unwillingness to wound me! Why are you trembling, dearest? I mean to be your own wife now, the sharer of your glory and of all your thoughts. Everything that I had learned has been clean sponged away, and my heart and mind are like the blank pages of a new book on which you shall write what beliefs you please. Look up at me, dearest. I never knew how much I loved you till I guessed from your works

what a sacrifice you had made in marrying a silly little thing like me!"

Words cannot depict the desolate expression that had settled on Paul d'Arley's face as his wife spoke. He had started to his feet mechanically, assisting her to rise, and she recoiled at seeing him stand speechless, as if an irremediable catastrophe had overtaken him. When he spoke at length it was with a groan.

"Tell me the truth, Aimée: it was Madame de Marœuil who lent you those books?"

"No, no, Paul; I went into the town and bought them myself. But why do you look at me like that, dear? You frighten me."

"Unhappy child! I am sure it was Madame de Marœuil who advised you to buy them," he murmured; then abruptly he tossed his head and broke out with a wrath that was awful: "Woe betide that woman! She has come into my house with a torch, and let her see to herself! I will wreak a vengeance on her that shall wring ten thousand tears from her eyes for every one that she has made you shed."

Aimée uttered a cry and attempted to restrain her husband; but he disengaged himself, rushed from the room and hurried to the stables. The groom who was there thought his master had gone mad, for Paul shouted for a saddle, helped to strap it on, and before the bit was fairly in the horse's mouth sprang into the stirrups and spurred into the night at full gallop. He rode towards the house where Madame de Marœuil lived, about five miles off, and some of the tardy peasants who met him on the road must have thought of him as the groom did—or that he was possessed of the devil, for they were pious people in those parts.

Madame de Marœuil was far from expecting such a visit. She was a handsome young widow, thoroughly Parisian, cool, coquettish, and heartless. Married early to a man old enough to be her grandfather, she had hailed her widowhood as a merciful release, and had lost no time in setting her cap at Paul d'Arley, whose fame, polished manners, and manly character had fascinated her. But it was not out of spite at having been rebuffed by him that she had tried to push his wife to disobedience. Madame de Marœuil was one of those women who do harm by nature, as nettles sting. To tattle and invent scandal, to estrange wife from husband, and lend a hand to intrigues in which the honour of families was blasted,

were to her mere pastimes. As to conjugal relations, she had a theory that among men there is not one but that is peccant, and she argued that women owe each other mutual protection to resist marital tyranny. This did not prevent her abusing her own sex in the hearing of men and despising it cordially in secret.

It chanced that when Paul d'Arley arrived Madame de Marœuil was reading one of his best novels, "*La Femme d'un Sot*," which she had perused many times from detecting several comforting analogies between herself and the heroine. She gave a start at hearing the door-bell violently clang; but before she could run to the window Paul had darted into the room, covered with mud, breathless and menacing. Without taking off his hat he rushed to her and seized her frail wrists as if he would break them.

"Wretched woman, what infernal spirit of mischief led you to disturb my wife's mind with those books of mine?"

"Don't, Monsieur d'Arley, you're hurting me!" she cried in terror. "I never advised Madame d'Arley to read your books."

"You are lying!" he raved. "When I suffered you to visit my wife I warned you of the conditions on which alone you might do it. I mistrusted your viperous tongue from the first."

Madame de Marœuil's features had blanched under Paul's flaming eyes. She struggled, panting, to free herself.

"I tell you to release me, sir, or I shall scream. I never did more than mention your books to your wife."

"Ah, that's it!" shouted Paul, pushing her back so roughly that she staggered. "You went in your hateful malice and excited her curiosity; but what have you given the poor little thing in exchange for that faith you destroyed in her? Could you endow her with the strong mind of a man to enable her to replace by unwavering reason the comfort which her religion brought her in every hour of trial? No; you never had such a thought; but in trying to soil the child's angel robe you only aimed at making her a demon of worldliness and depravity like yourself! But now quail—for as I am a living man you shall repent of what you have done! I will write a book, and expose you in it by name as in a pillory; and you shall become so infamous that the lowest of your sex shall point their fingers at you!"

Madame de Marœuil bounded under this brutal threat.

"Ah, this is too much!" she exclaimed.

"Your wife has been perverted by your books. Well, I am glad of it! This is the retribution on you for the misery of thousands of other women whom your books have ruined. There was a time when I too believed that there was another world where the wretchedness of this life was compensated; but you and others like you, who are the perdition of our country, scoffed these illusions away, and what did you give me in exchange but the fine philosophy that as we have nothing to live for, nothing to hope for, we should be stupid indeed not to get what pleasure we can out of this world? Ah! so you think to shatter the cross in every household, and then to plant it as a talisman on your own hearth. But there is some justice yet! You have thrown your impious books at God, and he has hurled them back on your roof-tree. So much the better!" and darting to the bell she pulled it. A servant appeared. "Show out M. d'Arley," she cried.

III.

NOT long after this the Paris papers announced that Paul d'Arley and his charming young wife had taken a house in the Champs Elysées and were coming to spend a few months there. As the private lives of great authors offer an engrossing interest to the French public, minutely accurate accounts were given of the Hôtel d'Arley, and of Paul's reasons for hiring it. It was said that so Parisian a writer could not languish away from a city which is to all other cities what the sun is to the planetary system, and that he was impatient to exhibit to the world the winsome little woman who had detained him so long in exile. In the course of a few days cards were issued for Madame d'Arley's first "at home."

Few guessed with what anguish Paul had drawn himself away from "The Elms;" and if we say few instead of none, it is because Madame de Marœuil had maliciously bruited the "ridiculous scene" which had taken place at her house, so that there were some who were aware that a skeleton existed in the great author's family cupboard. Paul had striven hard to undo the evil that had been wrought; and for several days tried everything that patient ingenuity and tender earnestness could suggest to bring back his wife to her discarded beliefs. But faith is like a temple: when ruined, it can be rebuilt, but not in a week. Aimée was possessed with a burning desire to go to Paris and see her husband's plays performed on the

stage, to hear him applauded, and to feel her heart ring with the echo of his praises. Such a wish could not be combated; and Paul took the only determination possible by resolving to bring his wife to Paris, and let her taste to her fill of the sensations which she coveted. He hoped that satiety would come to her as it had to him, making her long to renew their peaceful country life; and to hasten this end he decided that their baby should remain at St. Riquier, the air of which was healthier for him than that of the capital.

Aimée flew to Paris like a bird uncaged. Everything in it was new to her, and the people most of all. The D'Arlays had a luxurious house, kept a carriage, a man cook, servants in livery, and all the appurtenances of a mansion where large hospitality is to be exercised. During the first week after their arrival, not scores but hundreds of cards were left at the door; invitations poured in from ministers, princes, nobles, from the lords of art and letters, from everybody with a name or a purse; and then managers and publishers trooped up to the author's dwelling. Since his marriage Paul had finished a five-act comedy and commenced a novel. The comedy was at once accepted by the Théâtre Français and put in rehearsal; the novel was predicted in the papers to be the best he had ever written (though no reporter had obtained a glimpse of it), and the title was given: "*Un Mariage d'Amour*." Once more that brazen din which the most art-enamoured public in the world raises round its favourites resounded about Paul d'Arlay, and to Aimée this din was music.

She was not stinted of it, nor of anything else she fancied, for Paul was too shrewd to think he could cure any woman of Parisomania if he put the slightest restraint on her pleasure-seeking, and his policy was that of confectioners, who encourage their assistants to surfeit themselves with dainties at starting in order that they may be forever after abstemious. One day, having scanned his wife's attire, he remarked that it would not do for Paris, and took her to the eminent M. Worth's.

"Monsieur Worth," he said, "I have brought you my wife, and give you *carte blanche*; she relies on you to make her presentable."

M. Worth smirked with the air of a man who sees an exquisite picture very poorly framed.

"If madame will put herself in our

hands I think we shall be able to do justice to her rare beauty."

"That is exactly what she wants," said Paul pleasantly; "so say you make her a dozen dresses to begin with."

"Oh, Paul, a dozen!" exclaimed Aimée, with her provincial notions of economy quite startled.

"My dear child, M. Worth will tell you that a dozen are not too many if you are to hold your own against your good friends. I even question whether they will be enough."

From M. Worth's Aimée was taken to the bonnet-maker's, furrier's, lace-maker's, glover's, and finally to the jeweller's. Of some hundred thousand francs which had been lying at Paul's banker's, two-thirds melted away at once in preparations for making Aimée presentable to bevy of women, not one of whom was half as comely as herself. But Paul disbursed without counting. "When she reflects that we are wasting our boy's money, perhaps she will feel a twinge," was his calculation.

Aimée, however, was in no more mood for reflecting than is a person who drinks champagne for the first time. During the first month the novelty of her position made her just a little shy and awkward; at the end of the second month she wore her fine low dresses with ease, had learned to improve her complexion with potato-flour (*vulgo* violet-powder), and had discovered that nature had not given her hair sufficient without a chignon. At the end of the third month she had already marked herself a place in society; her drawing-room was a resort for wits; she could herself launch a repartee; and from week to week she lived the customary life of a woman of the world in all respects save one — church-going. Nothing would persuade her to attend Sunday mass or any other religious celebration. When she went by a church she could not help turning away her head and reddening, as though she were passing a house where she had done something wrong.

It was at the end of this third month that Paul d'Arlay's new comedy was brought out at the Théâtre Français. There was a general curiosity to note whether marriage, always a hazardous experiment with brain-workers, had made any difference in Paul's talent, and the house was crammed with celebrities. From first to last the piece was a triumphant success. Never had the author's dialogue been brighter, his characters so

boldly drawn, his dramatic situations more telling; and when the curtain fell on the closing act the whole audience rose, enthusiastically acclaiming the man whose fame was now placed forever beyond dispute. This scene was too much for Aimée's young nerves. She had watched the performance from a stage-box with one of her new friends, the Countess de Tréma, and when the audience, seeing that Paul did not answer their call, recognized his wife and turned towards her *en masse* to do her a public homage, she fell back, white and quivering in every limb, and swooned.

When she had been revived, and was driving home with the countess, the latter said, with emotion,

"Dear Madame d'Arly, I do not wonder that you should have been so much moved, for your influence is discernible in every line of this new play, and you have good reason to be proud."

"How so?" murmured Aimée.

"Why, it is the first play of M. d'Arly's which sends one home with a heart full of soothing sentiments. In listening to his other works one is transported, thrilled, yet the philosophy is so disconsolate that the spectator goes away discouraged. But this comedy we have just seen is a beautiful idyll—the work of a happy man."

Aimée answered nothing. In the last scene, where the hero, after trying adventures, settles down into a blissful home, Paul had arranged with the scene-painter to represent his own country house, "The Elms," and on beholding this unexpected picture Aimée's eyes had filled with tears. Her heart overflowed now in listening to the countess—but, once again, temples are not rebuilt in a day.

IV.

EIGHTEEN months elapsed. During that time the D'Arlys travelled to the seaside, thence to Monaco, then went on a round of visits to the country-seats of friends. Only once Aimée snatched a hurried week to go and see her child at "The Elms;" but she was impatient to get away again. Fashion had caught her in its whirlpool, and Paul in his weariness could detect in her no symptoms of a wish to resume her old habits. When, however, they returned to Paris for the winter season, an explanation between them became necessary for pecuniary reasons.

One morning Aimée came with a long face to say she was in debt. Her house-keeping accounts would not square with

her budget, and she feared she had been extravagant in millinery. Paul made good the deficit with something over, but he took the opportunity of stating his resources. The sale of his books and the performances of his plays brought him about eighty thousand francs a year, which was a sufficient income for ease, but not for squandering. His remonstrances were very gently worded, but to his surprise Aimée showed irritation at them. She was not at all the same Aimée as of yore. Her fresh complexion was fading under the influence of cosmetics and late hours, and her manners had something too deliberate in them.

"What you say is very just, Paul," she remarked, plucking at her smart dress; "but we could be richer if you pleased. Why are you so idle?"

"Idle, Aimée? That is the last reproach I should have thought of hearing from you."

"Well, I assure you I am not the person who originated it," she said doggedly. "A publisher was telling me the other day that you could earn four times what you are doing now if you chose to work more. And it's a fact that I have seen you writing half a day to fill three small sheets of paper."

"Well, yes, I have been almost three years about my new novel, which is now in the publisher's hands," admitted Paul quietly. "If I wrote more I might possibly be richer, but those few sheets of paper will give us something better than money, Aimée—a fame which will, I trust, live after both of us."

"Oh fame—fame!" exclaimed Aimée, pouting; "as if you had not enough of that already. And when we are both dead what can it matter to us, pray, whether your glory is more or less? The present is what we have to think of."

Paul was shocked by this application of his theories.

"You forget our boy, Aimée," he said.

"No, it's you who forget him," ejaculated Mme. d'Arly crossly. "You work, thinking only of yourself, as if our boy could make an income out of your name! If you did your duty as a father, you would labour to leave him a large fortune."

This was not the first little cloud that had sprung up between the two, but it was the first that caused Paul d'Arly the acute pang of feeling that his wife's heart was no longer in unison with his own. He soon had a much greater cause of trouble, for Aimée became jealous of him.

It was perfectly simple that she should

have become so, for there had insensibly grown up between them that estrangement which is inevitable when husband and wife have contrary tastes and follow different pursuits. Paul had not time to dance attendance on Aimée in all her mundane excursions. He was busy with his novel—that novel which he had begun in his honeymoon, and was ending under the cruel regret of a happiness which seemed to have gone forever. He hoped much of this work, and toiled carefully at it; and then he had academical duties. He had been deputed to report on the essays and poems to which the academy awards yearly prizes, and government had put him on a committee for inquiring into international copyright. As his house was always filled with visitors and with the noisy incomings of milliners and *costumiers*, he had hired private chambers where he could work undisturbed, and here he spent most of his days. He and Aimée seldom saw each other except at dinner-time. They had separate apartments, and Mme. d'Arley seldom returned from her balls and routs till the small hours, not long before the time when Paul was accustomed to get up. All this was Aimée's fault, not Paul's; but, womanlike, she came to fancy herself neglected. She would have had her husband accompany her in all her frivolous amusements, and when she found it impossible to prevail upon him so to do, she readily hearkened to the suggestions of her old evil councillor, Mme. de Marœuil, that Paul secretly bestowed on other women the attentions to which she was entitled.

Nothing could have been less true, but Mme. de Marœuil and Aimée had become fast friends, and the former was anxious to repay the grudge which she owed Paul for the latter's violent threats. One evening at a ministerial party, when Aimée was looking more than usually out of spirits, Mme. de Marœuil settled beside her on an ottoman, and adroitly led up the conversation to Paul d'Arley's private doings.

"Did you not tell me, dear, that your husband had lodgings in town?"

"Yes, he goes there every morning, and says he works. We are so little together that I have no time to question him."

"I wouldn't question him—men never tell the truth; but if I were you, I would keep an eye on Mme. de Tréma."

"Mme. de Tréma!" ejaculated Aimée, with a sudden flush. "Why do you think that she and Paul— But it's impossible, she is one of my best friends."

"Raison the more. All I can say is, that I saw her brougham standing at the door where M. d'Arley's chambers are. But mind, no scenes or hysterics, dear. If M. d'Arley plays you false, you should take a leaf out of his own books; remember his theories in '*La Femme d'un Sot*,' and make him jealous in his turn."

Now it was a fact that Paul d'Arley had elaborated a theory very much approved by French writers, and which may be summed up in the axiom that marital affection seldom lasts long, unless the wife can promote jealousy. This beautiful lesson was not lost upon Aimée. She had a host of admirers, and in the hope that she might bring Paul to look more closely after her, she singled out one—a handsome, puppy-like officer named De Marillac—and flirted systematically with him under Paul's eyes. Unfortunately Paul noticed nothing. He was too sensitive to ridicule to play the part of a Bluebeard, all the more so as he knew that many eyes in society were humorously watching to see whether he feared for himself the connubial woes which he had showered on so many personages in his books. So, although M. de Marillac was continually dangling about his house, danced with Aimée at balls, called on her in her box at the opera and theatres, and disported himself generally as only an amorous Frenchman can do, Paul paid not the slightest attention to him, acting like a man who feels secure of his wife's purity, and of his own. But this did not suit Mme. de Marœuil.

When the flirtation between Aimée and the officer had been lasting three months—and let it be admitted that it was on Aimée's part a very innocent flirtation—Madame de Marœuil sought an opportunity to warn Paul, and make him miserable. The author was often compelled to escort his wife for an hour or two to official parties, and it was on one of these occasions that Madame de Marœuil glided up to him with a smiling look of effrontery.

"Well, my old enemy, it is a long time since we have spoken to each other. Is it still your intention to gibbet me?"

"You did me so much harm, madame," answered Paul gravely, "that no reprisal of mine would be an adequate revenge, therefore I forgive you."

"That's kindly spoken, but I have always meant better by you than you suspect, Monsieur d'Arley, and to give you a proof I must warn you now to observe your wife. She is young and inexperienced, and I am afraid she will be com-

promising herself with M. de Marillac. See them both together now. Well, it's like that every evening."

Paul glanced in the direction indicated, and not a muscle of his face betrayed that he was in the slightest degree moved. But the blow had come upon him like a bullet. For the first time the disproportion in age between his wife and himself occurred to him. She was almost a child, he was past middle age; she had married to be free from the restraints of convent life, he had taken a wife to find rest after a laborious and distracted career. But how ludicrous might he not seem to her, with his melancholy pinings after that humdrum existence which she in her exuberant youth despised! He turned over this new reflection in many ways; nevertheless, he did not speak to Aimée about the officer. He waited till he had proof positive of her guilt or levity, whichever it might be, and it was not until he had observed the pair closely for another week that he resolved to remonstrate with Aimée, whom he saw, or fancied he saw, to have been merely giddy.

It happened that the day on which he took this resolution was the eve of that on which his novel, "*Le Mariage d'Amour*," was to be published. In that book he had poured out his whole heart in pictures of the felicity of tranquil love in wedded life, and, with the intuition which seldom fails an author who writes conscientiously, he felt that his work was powerful enough to move a reader; and he hoped — with what anxiety he himself only knew — that it might move Aimée. The early copies of the work had been sent by the publisher, and Paul took one of them to give his wife. Just as he was going towards her apartments a letter was brought him from St. Ricquier, announcing that his child had been seized with an attack of whooping-cough; and this communication, though distressing, appeared to have come just in time to serve his purpose.

He found Aimée in her dressing-room, surrounded by tulle, silks, and jewels, and other extravagant preparations for a fancy-dress ball.

"I am sorry to say our boy is ill, Aimée," he said, handing her the letter, and laying the book on the table. "I think we had better both go down to St. Ricquier to-night."

"Oh, it's impossible!" she exclaimed. "There's a ball at the Austrian ambassador's."

This was thoughtlessly, not heartlessly

said, but so unmotherly a reply filled Paul with pain and some indignation.

"Supposing our child were to die while you were dancing?" he said, severely.

"Oh, please don't talk in that depressing way, Paul. Let me see what the letter says. Whooping-cough; all children have whooping-cough; and this, the nurse says, is but a slight attack. We will go to-morrow morning — the first thing, if you like. But what are you staring at?"

"Your dress — you are not going to wear that?"

"Why not, pray?"

"Because it is fit only for an actress — not an honest woman."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Aimée, mockingly. "And do you know where I got the idea of that improper dress? Why, out of one of your own books! One of your heroines — a duchess — dresses as a naiad for a Tuileries fête, and you fill two whole pages with sarcasms against her dreary husband, who objected to see her show off her beauty becomingly!"

Paul bit his lips. At every turn in his wedded life some sin of his pen was finding him out.

"You know I never proposed my books to you as models of morality," he said, reddening. "I wrote many things when I was young of which I am ashamed now. But there is another thing about which I wished to warn you, Aimée. People are observing that you behave rather too unguardedly with M. de Marillac."

"Aha! so your eyes condescend to look after your wife at last!" cried Aimée, folding her arms, and gazing at him with flashes of stung pride. She was in a passion, her hair was falling over her shoulders, and she looked pretty and strange enough in her wildness. "Yes, it's true. M. de Marillac is fonder of my company than my own husband is. But before you have a right to reproach me, Paul, you must break off your relations with Madame de Tréma!"

"With Madame de Tréma? What an absurdity, Aimée! Will you accept my assurance that I have not spoken a hundred words with the countess in the course of a twelvemonth?"

"You're bound to say so, of course, but others tell me differently; and if you mean to use your liberty, Paul, I shall use mine."

"Not to go to this ball, I hope. I ask you once again, Aimée, to come with me to St. Ricquier, and to be more careful for the future in your conduct with that officer."

"And here is my answer," cried Aimée,

defiantly. "I *will* go to the ball, and I shall wear the dress which you put on your duchess, and I shall dance twice with M. de Marillac, as I have promised him to do, and if you are not satisfied you must mend your behaviour to me, which has been unkind and unmanly to a degree."

"Very well, Aimée," said Paul, with a pale face. "I am not a tyrant, but when a woman disobeys her husband, and seems disposed to trifle with his honour, she brings punishment on the man who abets her misconduct," and with these words he left the room.

Aimée was a little frightened at what she had done; but she was secretly glad at having stirred Paul to jealousy, and flattered herself that in the journey which she truly proposed making with him on the morrow, a reconciliation might ensue between them. She cried, and if Paul had come back at that moment, she would have flung her arms round his neck and prayed his forgiveness. But he did not return; so she set off to the ball in her maid's dress, danced twice with M. de Marillac as she had promised him, and talked to him with a loud forced gaiety, whilst her heart fluttered terribly as she saw her husband coldly gazing at them both. What followed may be soon told. Social conventions in France oblige a man to maintain his honour at the sword's point. Paul d'Arley glided up to M. de Marillac and beckoned him aside.

"Monsieur," he said calmly, "we are both men who can understand each other at a word. If you will name your seconds, we can settle our differences before day-break."

The officer understood and bowed. "I must only declare to you that madame is innocent," he added.

"I never doubted it," answered Paul, quietly.

So a few hours later, and just before dawn, Paul d'Arley and the officer met in the Bois de Vincennes. The duel could not be a long one. M. de Marillac scarcely defended himself, and after a few passes Paul touched him on the chest. The seconds at sight of blood stopped the fight, and Paul, whose honour was conventionally satisfied by this scratch, returned to his house. The first thing that met him on his arrival was a telegram announcing that his child had suddenly died.

He sat down with a heavy sigh and reflected. Truth to say, it had not needed this announcement of his boy's death to prompt him to the fatal course he was now about to take; but his bereavement

justified his resolution. Of what use or pleasure was his life to him now? He had pondered this question ever since he thought he had read in Aimée's eyes that she had ceased to love him, and the answer was this, that the sooner he was out of the world the better. He was growing old; his wife had many years of life before her; better leave her free to enjoy them since such was her bent. He was not moulded of the stuff to make domestic despots, and yet he loved his wife too well to bear her infidelity or discontent with resignation.

Coldly and tranquilly, without quaver or bravado, he unlocked a cupboard and drew out a case of pistols, chose one and loaded. But as he stood on that brink of eternity where so many other men have hesitated, what was it that made the sceptic pause a minute? It was grey morning, but there on his desk, beaming very white in the dim light, lay the ivory crucifix which had once hung in his wife's room, and which he had kept since the day when she had discarded it.

He took it up and looked wistfully at it, then for Aimée's sake he raised it to his lips. He had just done so, when it seemed to him that a door opened, and down the passage came, with quick steps and a panting breath, a footfall light as a child's flying for succour. It approached; now it was nearer.

"Who's there?" cried Paul, startled.

The door was not locked; it opened, and Aimée stood on the threshold, hugging her husband's new book to her breast, and looking at him with eyes brimming.

"I have read it to the last line, Paul," she cried, in a broken voice, and she flung herself at his feet. "Oh my darling, let us go back to our home. I do not think we have been either of us happy since that wretched day when I disobeyed you. But God is good, and you believe in him as I do; in every word of this noble book there is Christian faith; and see, my darling, you are crying!"

From Blackwood's Magazine.

THE DILEMMA.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE capture and occupation of the residency lodge, as Sparrow's house was styled, in the night attack conducted by Falkland and recounted in our last number, gave a new aspect to the defence. It is true that the main garrison had to be

reduced by the strength of the picket now established in the new outpost; but the relief caused by the latter more than compensated for this. The guards could now be withdrawn from the east side of the main building, and those in the portico and bath-house were reduced in strength. Moreover, the ground between the two buildings was now practically free from fire. The moral effect of the victory was even greater. Not only had the enemy made no progress in their blockade; they had been forced to give ground. Falkland was sensible, indeed, that he had made a blunder in not occupying the lodge in the first instance, but was consoled by the reflection that even the most successful war is made up of blunders; and although poor Braywell's cheerful face was missed, and the little garrison could ill spare the gap made by the night's work in its slender muster-roll, still the loss sustained was extremely small considering the nature of the service. The garrison was naturally, therefore, in high spirits next morning, and a sense of excitement pervaded the building. Those were to be envied who were sent over to the lodge on errands with supplies or messages, giving them the opportunity to examine for themselves the scene of the exploit; while the account of the affair which those who had come back after taking part in it were called on to repeat in the different parts of the building, afforded matter for endless conversation and questionings. Miss Peart wanted to run across under Sprague's escort to see the place herself, but was stopped by her mother. No sign of the enemy could now be discerned from the main building, except by the look-out on the roof; and, in the absence of any present danger, it seemed as if the active siege were really over, and that at most they would now have to undergo a blockade, which must surely be raised very soon. Colonel Falkland had calculated that the relief would arrive in a week at latest, and four days had already passed.

Four days! it might have been a year, so long did the time seem since they were first shut up, and so completely had the emergency of present needs effaced for the time all interest in the past. The few acres of ground commanded by the rifles of the little garrison made up their world; and beyond an occasional expression listlessly thrown out as to how things might be passing in the rest of India, the conversation within all turned on the business of the hour. The last reports of the

look-out man of any movements observed among the enemy, whose main camp was still pitched beyond the court-house about half a mile off, and the interpretation to be put upon them; any change ordered in the roster for duty; counting the hours till it should be time to serve out the rations of tobacco; criticisms on the toughness of the mutton stew, which formed the main item of their simple meals; calculations whose turn it was to receive a share of the beer which Captain Buxey doled out with economic care,—these were for the most part the topics of conversation.

At first sight the appearance presented by the interior of the building during this time might have seemed one of disorder; here and there in the verandas men lying asleep on cots at any hour of the day, others strolling listlessly from place to place to exchange a word with their comrades at other posts, while in the drawing-room a group of persons might be seen lounging about, the etiquette of manners preserved among them being strangely at variance with their haggard and dishevelled appearance; a few only of the men wore coats over their shirts or under-waistcoats, which with dirty white or flannel trousers made up a costume in keeping with the unshorn and hot but pallid faces of the wearers; while of the ladies' garb the best that could be said was that it was feminine, the wearers having for the most part abandoned any attempt at adornment as well as at trying to keep cool, and wearing their hair tied in a knot at the back of the head. A few fanned themselves when they had leisure, but generally the heat was allowed to take its course as something too fierce to be contended with. Not that the room looked untidy; of the servants who had remained with their master, one belonged to the sweeper caste, and performed his customary functions of sweeping all the floors daily, while the ladies took it in turn to dust the furniture. Nor amid the seeming listlessness or movement about the place was there any real disorder or want of discipline. Only those were asleep who were off duty, and only a fourth part of each of the different guards could be absent from their post at a time. A sentry was stationed at the headquarters of each post, who, standing on a table so as to look over the parapet, watched the ground in front. There was always also a look-out man on the roof of the building; the rounds were made every hour by a senior officer; and whether on or off duty, every one had his weapons with him ready for

instant use. At night the garrison was on the alert, so sleep must be taken by day. The ladies, too, had their regular turn of duty in the sick-room, while Mrs. Hodder and Mrs. De Souza the clerk's wife undertook the washing of such garments as could be spared for the purpose. Thus all were occupied, with the exception only of Mrs. O'Halloran, the wife of the bazaar-sergeant who had been killed on the night of the outbreak, an East Indian, who, although the mother of two children and soon to be the mother of a third, looked but a child herself. Such mental and bodily powers as the poor creature might have possessed, had become quite paralyzed by the shock of events. Having found her way to the residency on the night of the outbreak, in the carriage in which her husband had placed his wife and children before he went off himself to get shot at his post of duty, she seemed incapable of rousing herself to do anything, but sat day after day listlessly in a chair, speaking when addressed, and coming to table at meal-times, but taking no apparent interest in what was going on around. Fortunately Mrs. Hodder had taken the children under her care, washing them and dressing them in their scanty clothing every morning, while Miss Peart helped her to look after them during the day; and the poor dusky little things, who partook more of the nature of native than European children, were perfectly docile and contented, amusing themselves happily with the little rag dolls which that young lady had fabricated for them. "I can't make out properly what Mrs. O'Halloran says," Miss Peart had remarked to Spragge; "she does talk in such an extraordinary way—it isn't English and it isn't Hindustani, or like anything else I ever heard before; but only think, she is not sixteen yet, at least as far as she knows, for she is not sure about her age, and she can neither read nor write. Her father was a band-boy in your regiment; isn't it dreadful? He may actually be fighting against us!" "You may depend on it, the band-boys are not fighting," replied Spragge, "whatever else they may be doing; that is not at all in their line." But indeed no one knew what had become of the Christian bandsmen belonging to the native regiments—whether they had been killed, or had run away, or were serving with the mutineers. Drums and fifes had been heard every evening proceeding from the rebel camp, but these might belong to the 80th, whose bandsmen were all natives.

This day, then, was the most tranquil which the garrison had passed. They had become used to the hardships of the situation; all was quiet without and prosperous within, for the three wounded men were doing well. Captain Sparrow displayed a philosophical resignation to the misfortune which deprived the garrison of his services; and when Justine, to whom fell the office of waiting on him, was dilating to Yorke, as she met him in the doorway of the sick-room, on the sad chance which struck down the gallant captain while nobly leading the attack upon his own house, the latter did not feel it necessary to tell her or any one else, that as no shots had been fired until the assailants had entered the veranda, the captain must have been considerably to the rear of the party to have been hit while outside.

As Olivia came out of the ladies' room that evening into the west veranda to join the party on duty there for a little fresh air and conversation, she stood for a moment in the doorway watching with amusement the young men engaged in hunting a scorpion which had crawled under an empty beer-box. "That's the seventh scorpion which has been killed in this veranda," said Spragge, as he dexterously extracted the insect from a crevice in the box wherein it had tried to take refuge; "see what a monster it is, Mrs. Falkland!" he continued, holding it up between his finger and thumb for the lady's inspection. "You needn't be afraid of it; grasp a scorpion by the tail firmly in this way, you see, and he is impotent for evil, like Pandy outside if you show him the muzzle of a rifle. But he must perish, nevertheless; no quarter can be given to the enemy,"—and so saying, the young man dropped the scorpion on the pavement and trod upon it.

"I cannot think why there should be this plague of scorpions," said Olivia, sitting down on a chair which one of the party had placed for her; "we used not to be troubled with them at all in former days."

"It is because the ground has been disturbed," said Yorke; "they live in the ground, and the digging of these ditches round the house has brought them out."

"I don't know what the cause may be," said Spragge, "but I protest, as a man and a sentry, against being exposed to these risks. Life will become positively dangerous if this sort of thing goes on. Talk about 'nervous duty' indeed! 'nervous duty' is a joke to sitting down on one of

these boxes without taking an observation first."

"There is no rose without a thorn," observed another young fellow. "Life in this veranda would be really too jolly if it wasn't flavoured with a chance of scorpions; besides, there is to be no 'nervous duty' to-night, so the one is a set-off against the other."

"Nervous duty" was the slang name given in the garrison to any special service, such as the enterprise of the previous night.

The western veranda being the hottest part of the building at evening, was usually the least frequented at that time; and on this occasion its only occupants besides Olivia were the guard stationed there, one of whom, being on duty, was standing on a chest looking over the parapet; the two sepoys attached to the post were sitting on the floor at the end, smoking a joint hookah, with their muskets by their side; while three or four officers stood leaning on their rifles round Olivia's chair. Unshorn, and clad in scanty garments soiled with dust and sweat, yet they looked like true knights ready to protect their princess to the death; and sounds of light laughter broke from the little group, while Olivia joined in the conversation, her manner with them all being such as might become a sister among trusty brothers. The young men in the garrison almost worshipped Mrs. Falkland, who had sympathy and gracious words for all.

The others were rallying Yorke on what they termed his dandified appearance; and indeed that young officer was the only one of the party in a clean shirt—a phenomenon which he was fain to explain, apologetically, was due to his having selfishly kept back a brace of those garments for his own use, while distributing the rest of his wardrobe among his fugitive brother officers, so that he could indulge in an occasional change of raiment. "But you will look just as shabby as any of us by to-morrow, my boy," said Spragge, "for the laundry arrangements appear to have collapsed. A useful garment of mine has been at the wash ever since yesterday morning, and hasn't turned up yet." Then, as the little party was breaking up, Olivia, as she passed into her room, called to Yorke to follow and bring his other shirt for her to wash; and as she insisted on being obeyed, notwithstanding his protestations, he was fain to produce the soiled garment from his box. Yorke felt ashamed of himself when delivering it up,

for allowing her to take it from him. It was well enough for Mrs. Hodder and Mrs. De Souza to act as washerwomen, but that Olivia should undertake this menial office on his behalf seemed like desecration. Nevertheless, as he stood by, while Olivia, baring her white arms, poured water into a basin, and after washing the shirt, handed it to him with a sisterly smile to hang up to dry in the veranda, it seemed to the young man as if she had never borne so noble a presence. He could have stooped to the ground in his veneration to kiss the hem of her robe, and for the time he felt that the life they were now leading, which brought him near her person, and made him one of her defenders, was far happier than the old days of peace and banishment from her presence.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE night began quietly, but had not made much advance when the look-out sentry in the west veranda heard a noise in the garden and called up his guard, and soon the whole garrison was under arms. Sounds could be made out as of a body of men collected there, behind the hedge, and therefore not more than fifty yards off, and for some time the defenders remained in continued expectation of another immediate attack. But the hours passed on and no forward movement was made, while the sound of digging could be distinctly heard. The enemy were apparently intrenching themselves in this advanced position. About midnight Falkland sent out Yorke and the jemadar to reconnoitre, one from the bath-house trench, the other from the portico. But this time the enemy were not to be caught napping; they had sentries all along the hedge, preventing approach to the scene of operations, and the scouts could only make out that the garden seemed full of men, and that the spade was hard at work. It seemed useless to throw away ammunition by firing in the dark; but the garrison was kept under arms all night, although no longer expecting an immediate attack, yet filled with the uneasiness which men acting on the defensive must feel, when their assailants are planning some new scheme against them.

In the morning a long mound from three to four feet high could be seen here and there in the gaps between the bushes, at a distance of about fifty yards from and parallel to the house. At first the garrison supposed that this was merely a device to annoy them by bringing musketry-fire on the building at close quarters; but

the trench was not made use of for this purpose, nor was there any fire opened from other quarters. The new position, however, was evidently occupied in some force; men could be seen coming and going, although the bushes were too thick to distinguish their movements plainly; and all day long the spade was kept at work, and it could be seen that more earth was being thrown up.

For so long as the garrison was kept under arms, no man could leave his post; but when about sunrise it became apparent that no immediate enterprise was in contemplation by the enemy, the usual routine was returned to, and some of the members of each guard being now free to go about the building, this new move of the rebels was everywhere warmly discussed, the general opinion being to the effect that the colonel would not allow Pandy to take the offensive in this way for nothing, and that another bout of "nervous duty" might be looked for soon. And public opinion was right. For some time Falkland, watching the enemy's proceedings from the roof, was puzzled to know what they meant; but Braddon, who was crouching beside him behind the west veranda parapet, suddenly hit on the true solution. They were sinking a well from which to drive a mine under the building. There could be no doubt about it. All this extra digging could be with no other object, for the parapet was high enough to afford ample cover already, if a trench of occupation only were in contemplation. The unaggressive attitude of the enemy all this time confirmed the suspicion. No loopholes garnished the crest of the trench, as would have been the case if it was meant for offensive purposes, and the garrison provoked no fire by exposing themselves above their walls in watching the operation. The enemy evidently wanted not to provoke an exchange of fire, but to carry on their digging without disturbance. The well-sinkers of Mustaphabad were famous. Fifty feet a-day would be easy work in that light soil. Give them three days and the building would be reached and blown up.

Falkland's resolution was soon taken. A sally must be made, and the miners driven away at all costs. Another surprise like that on Sparrow's house could not be hoped for; but by creeping down to the south of the garden, and then working up along the line of the hedge, the enemy might be taken in flank unawares, and if roughly handled they would probably give up their occupation of the

garden; and then, their last attempt failing, they might lose heart and break up the siege altogether. The brigadier gave his consent; and Braddon, whom Falkland consulted, entirely approved of the enterprise, only suggesting as a useful condition that he should be allowed to form one of the party. It was arranged that the sally should be made by the force told off to relieve the lodge picket, before proceeding to that place at dark; and accordingly, when that relief, consisting of five officers and four sepoy under Major Peart, paraded for duty at sunset in the bath-house, Falkland and Braddon joined them there, and the former announced the proposed enterprise to the party, explaining with great minuteness the plan of operations. The success of the sally would depend on every man knowing exactly what had to be done.

Thus the scheme had been kept pretty quiet; for the different persons told off to take a share, as they made their way to the rendezvous, looked to be merely the relief parading for the lodge picket, and the brigadier had again been made to promise not to tell the ladies: but as usual in such cases, the intention had leaked out; the fact that Braddon—who commanded in the portico, and who had never been absent save for a few minutes from his post—should be selected for picket duty was noted; and a feeling of expectancy pervaded the building, extending even to the sick-room.

"Are you for nervous duty again to-night, Arty?" said little Raugh, as Yorke came up to his bedside before reappearing to the rendezvous, carrying a musket and girded with a belt and bayonet. "What's up again to-night?"

"Nothing particular," replied Yorke; "but it is as well to be ready for duty; besides, the picket has got orders to wear bayonets." This he added for Olivia's information, who had come up to the bedside, and was looking anxiously at him.

"But *you* don't go on picket duty, do you? You are the colonel's staff-officer, you know. What's the good of trying to humbug a fellow?" said the sick lad, crossly; and then, turning to Olivia, he cried, "Oh, Mrs. Falkland, how long you have been away! I thought you were never coming back."

"Keep quiet, Mr. Raugh," said Olivia, gently, smoothing the sheet which the youngster had kicked almost off in his restlessness. "I have only been away for a very few minutes, you know, and Justine promised to look after you."

"Oh, I don't care about Justine," replied Johnny; "let her stick to Sparrow — they seem to suit each other;" and the two listeners, turning to look in the direction of Captain Sparrow's bed, could not help smiling at what they saw — for that gentleman, propped by a chair supporting his pillow, was sitting up and holding one of his fair nurse's hands with *empressement*, while the latter, fanning him with the other, was looking downwards with an expressive simper on her face which indicated that the captain's conversation was of a gratifying nature.

"The poor boy is rather feverish this evening," said Olivia to Yorke, following him a few steps as he returned towards the door, "and that makes him irritable; but of course he is right in his suspicion. There is to be another attack somewhere to-night, I can see; and if you are going, my husband must be going too. He must have gone to the bath-house already; I could not find him anywhere. If I had, I would not have said a word to dissuade him; but oh, Mr. Yorke, is it right for him always to put himself in the front in this way?" And Olivia's large eyes looked anxiously into his, as she waited for an answer.

"I don't think there will be much in the way of danger, Mrs. Falkland," replied the young man, involuntarily looking downwards; for the glance cast on him was almost more than he could bear, and he felt that to return it would betray his secret. "Pandy has been hit so hard that he is pretty well knocked out of time, and is not likely to show fight; besides, example is everything, and the colonel is worth a dozen men in work like this. But I will do what I can to prevent his exposing himself more than necessary, although perhaps that may not be much."

"Thank you, my noble friend," said Olivia, with fervour, holding out her hand; "God bring you back safe again!"

"Much she cares about my safe return," thought the young man bitterly, as he moved away. "All she thinks about is the colonel. And yet if it were otherwise should I not cease to worship her? She would not be my ideal woman if she were not a true wife."

The little detachment was drawn up on the platform of the bath-house, while Colonel Falkland explained carefully what had to be done, translating his instructions to the four sepoys who formed part of it. Then they waited till it should be dark enough to sally forth.

As soon as the time arrived for starting, Falkland, taking Yorke aside, told him he had better return to the house, and give word to Major Dumble, who was left in command, that the expedition was starting.

"But surely, sir, you will take your aide-de-camp with you?" pleaded Yorke.

"No, no, my dear boy — not this time; there is no work for a staff-officer to do. Besides, there are enough of us as it is."

"You forget, sir, that I know the ins and outs of the garden better than anybody. I may really be of use."

"There is something in that," said the colonel, "but I want to leave somebody behind with a head on his shoulders. Well, Braddon," he continued, turning to that officer, and calling him up to where they were standing, "Let Yorke take your place; it will be better that you should remain to look after matters here."

"Confound it, colonel," pleaded Braddon, "let us have fair play, please. I haven't been on nervous duty of any sort for ever so long. Besides, I think a fellow ought to have a mouthful of fresh air when he gets a chance. That main guard is the very deuce for heat."

"Why, this is rank mutiny," said Falkland, laughing. "Well, I suppose you must have your way. You, Yorke, can come as a supernumerary; keep behind me."

Then Falkland led the way out of the bath-house at the south end, through a gap made in the parapet round the well, and the party moved silently down in single file away from the building. All were armed with muskets and bayonets except the leader, who had a sword and revolver. When they had advanced about a hundred yards Falkland turned to his right, followed in the same order till the garden was reached, when, passing through an opening in the hedge, the party faced to their right, forming a line of single files at one pace distance from each other, of which Falkland was on the left or outer flank — Braddon, who had brought up the rear, being on the right, and just within the line of the hedge. Thus the assailants were on the flank of the enemy's working-party posted opposite to the house, on which they now silently advanced after pausing for a few seconds to get into order, during which they could distinctly hear the hum of voices and the noise of the diggers. Whatever caution the enemy might have taken against surprise, they evidently did not expect an attack from this quarter; and the assailants

advanced for some distance without being perceived, till they came upon a couple of men lying on the ground behind a bush. There was a momentary waving of the line, a couple of dull thuds with the bayonet and a muttered cry, and the line moved on. But this silence could not be maintained. One of the party, as they made their way through the bushes, stumbled and fell; the noise was heard by the enemy's guard; and as the line came up they had started to their feet and were standing huddled in a group, as if irresolute and not knowing what to expect. The bushes were thick and the darkness great, and the assailants were close on their foes before any resistance was made. Then one or two shots were fired, lighting up the scene, a line of a dozen men pressing forward against a much larger body, but irresolute and in disorder. "I am hit," called out Major Peart, falling to the ground. "Fire, and charge!" cried Falkland, discharging his revolver as he spoke, and a volley fired at arm's length was followed by a rush and a hand-to-hand fight. Several sepoy fell, others fled, some fired their muskets; a few sprang on the line sword in hand, and were killed with the bayonets. Two attacked Falkland, who was on the flank, at once, and the sabre of one would have cut him down; but Yorke, who was behind him, parrying the stroke with his bayonet, ran the assailant through. It was real fighting, but lasted only for a few seconds, and then the place was cleared of the enemy, and only the victors remained and the slain, whose bodies, clad in white jackets and waistcloths, lay scattered on the ground.

One or two of the party made as if to stop and look after their wounded comrade, but Falkland called on them to keep in line and clear the garden first; and the line advanced along the whole length of it, and then wheeling round on their left, turned back and pushed through it again, this time at a greater distance from the house. Three or four times they traversed the garden in this way, gradually working to the boundary-wall and clearing it of enemies. Here and there they came on a white-clothed figure, which flitted away at their approach, sometimes firing at random first. The enemy, taken by surprise and bewildered at the nature of the attack and without leaders, had abandoned the garden almost without resistance, leaving some ten or a dozen of their comrades on the ground. They now began, however, to line the garden-wall, and to send from behind it an ill-directed fire, and

Falkland withdrew his party towards the spot where Peart had fallen. But although this could at once be recognized by the bodies of the dead sepoy, Peart was missing. "He must have got up and made his way into the house," said one; and Falkland despatched Spragge to find out if this was so. "We must not leave him alone if he is still outside," he said; "it was one thing to spoil the effect of our advance by stopping to look after the wounded, it is another to desert a wounded comrade;" and the party rested for a few minutes, examining as far as they could in the darkness the nature of the enemy's work behind the trench, which confirmed the suspicion on which the sally had been undertaken. Close to the scene of the fight was the shaft of a well into which one of the party nearly fell; and Yorke descending into it by the ladder which the enemy had left, groped his way, the colonel's revolver in hand, along the gallery running out from the bottom, some thirty feet long already—fortunately for him, deserted.

Presently a messenger came from the house to say that Peart had certainly not returned either to the main building or to the bath-house. "He must have moved a little, perhaps by the way we came," said Falkland; "let us search in that direction;" and they traversed the garden along the hedge up to the starting-point, but without success. The two dead sepoy who were first killed were lying where they had been left, but their own comrade was not to be seen. Then Falkland spread out his party to extend the search, and at last one of them stumbled on something under a bush, which appeared to be the missing officer. "He is soaking in blood," said Braddon, stooping down, "and cannot speak." "Has any one a light about him?" asked Falkland, also bending over the body, and trying in vain to discover its condition in the darkness.

A match was produced and lighted, and by the clear flame which rose steadily in the still air, the dress could be recognized as that of Peart, but the features were undistinguishable, so slashed was the face with sword-cuts, while the body, besides being mangled in the same way, was pierced with bayonet-wounds. He seemed to recognize them, but could not speak. "Shall we lift him up and carry him back, sir?" whispered Braddon. "Better call the doctor here," replied Falkland, placing his hand on the clotted fragments of clothes that covered the wounded man's heart. "Yorke, do you go and fetch Max-

well; and Braddon, do you move forward with half-a-dozen men and extend in our front, to give warning if the enemy should advance. Not that they will molest us to-night. And, Yorke, we shall want a lantern."

Another brief space ensued, while the little group surrounded the wounded man, whose low moans alone broke the silence. Then Maxwell came, and the lantern was lighted behind the bushes, whence its light could not reach towards the enemy; but the doctor had scarcely arrived when the moans ceased, and he shook his head as he arose from stooping over the body. "He could not have lived long in that state," he observed; "it is as well he has died at once."

"We will bury him here in the trench," said Falkland; "it is better that his poor wife should not see him." And they set to work with some shovels which had been found lying scattered about at the top of the mine.

Thus had the sortie done its work of clearing the garden, and the whole business did not last ten minutes; but it was more than an hour before the party returned within the protection of the building, for on Peart's burial, Falkland set some of them to throw the dead bodies of the sepoys into the mine, and shovel the earth taken from it back again, while the rest kept guard in front. But the enemy's random fire from behind the wall took effect at last. One of the sepoys came up to Falkland to say he was hit, and asked leave to go back, and the latter then drew off the rest of the party.

The course of the enterprise had been watched by the ladies from the top of the house. The time had gone by for thinking about stray bullets; and, having sought the open air at dusk, they were not to be persuaded to descend by the warning given them by Captain Buxey, the only officer off duty, of the dangers of the coming sortie. They stood facing the western parapet, looking down with throbbing hearts on the scene below. The brief main conflict took place within fifty yards of them; and they could distinguish the voices which uttered the hurried oaths and cries, as the assailants met their foes, while the flash of the firearms lighted up the group for an instant. Bushes concealed the bodies, but their heads and shoulders were clear in view; it was a momentary vision of men engaged in mortal strife, breathing hate and passion in their faces. Then all was dark; but there could be heard the tramping of persons

hurrying through the bushes, while the position of the fire, which now and then flashed out of the darkness, showed that the assailants were driving the enemy out of the garden.

No one dared ask the others whether they thought there had been any loss.

"What is that?" presently whispered some one, as a movement could be heard close to the edge of the garden, at the spot where the encounter had taken place. "Can that be our people coming back?" But no, they were still at the far end of the garden, some three hundred yards off. The noise was really caused by the rebel sepoys who were down in the mine when the attack took place, and who, creeping out after the sortie had advanced, came upon the body of the wounded Peart, and were dragging it away, but, getting hurried, had hacked and stabbed him, and run off.

Then the lookers-on could make out that the assailants were returning after scouring the garden, and then that they were halted by the mine-head. Presently a footstep could be heard on the gravel, and a figure seen making for the covered way, and exchanging words with the guard within, and the ladies ran down to the rooms below to meet Spragge as he entered the building. "They have carried the mine in splendid style," said one of the officers who surrounded Spragge to the ladies as they came hurrying up; "but Spragge has come to know if Peart is here; he has been hit, and is missing. They think he must have come back by himself."

"What is that about my husband?" cried Mrs. Peart, pressing forward in the dimly-lighted veranda towards Spragge; "what has happened?"

"He was hit at the first go-off," Spragge answered, "but not badly, we hope, or he couldn't have walked home, you know. Where is the doctor?" continued Spragge, and staggering forward he would have fallen if another officer had not caught him; and by the light just then brought up, his breast was seen to be dripping with blood. Then while Maxwell and Grumbull laid him on the floor and examined his wound, the vain search was made through and round the building for the missing officer.

Shortly afterwards Maxwell was summoned away, and left his patient with Grumbull. "Thank you, Grumbull," said the wounded man, faintly, as the former continued the examination; "every confidence in you, of course, but I would rather wait till Maxwell comes back; so pray let

me alone for a bit, like a good fellow." Then as Mrs. Peart, candle in hand, and with a scared face, was traversing the building, some one told her that her husband was found, and then that he was dead, and that they were burying him in the garden.

When the party returned, Falkland sought out Mrs. Peart, and told her that her husband had fallen while gallantly doing his duty, and patting Kitty Peart on the head as she stood by looking up at the colonel, told her to be a brave girl, and help her mother to bear the trial. It was one of the strangest scenes of those strange times: the group of officers, flushed and hot from their labours, telling the story to such of their comrades as were free to join them; a little in advance of them Falkland talking to Mrs. Peart, behind whom were assembled the other ladies, who had come to hear the news; the one lamp suspended from the ceiling throwing a dim light over the big room, the candle Mrs. Peart still carried bringing into stronger relief Falkland's grave face and the scared aspect of the poor widow, while the daughter, with Falkland's hand resting on her head, had burst into tears. "Come away, dear," said Olivia, gently; and, putting her arm round Mrs. Peart's waist, led her away to the ladies' room, whither the sobbing girl followed them.

Spragge had had a narrow escape with his life, the bullet which hit him having glanced off, making a flesh-wound and breaking a rib. He was put to bed in the sick-room and tended with the other patients, and warmly commended in the morning by Falkland for his behaviour in keeping his place in the line till the fighting was over, notwithstanding his wound. The sepooy hit by the stray bullet while filling up the mine was less fortunate. He had been shot through the body; and although he did not feel much hurt at first, and was able to walk back, he died in the morning.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

THE AMERICAN HEROINE.

OF all the curiosities given to the world by America, the national heroine of romance is, to our mind, one of the most singular and interesting. She speaks for more than herself; she throws a light on American social institutions and ideas, such as not even the travelling notes of observant and philosophical members of Parliament give us; and through her we are

constantly getting deeper insight into the working of the wonderful social and political fabric that those energetic and fearless descendants of ours are building out of old-English manners. If we examine the American heroine as she appears in the pages of the earlier novelists, and compare her with those of to-day, we find that she has undergone a gradual development and change from the flashing-eyed squaw of Mr. Fennimore Cooper's tales, up to the completed type in the hands of Mrs. Stowe, the younger Hawthorne, or Miss Alcott. She has grown with the growth of her country, and strengthened with its strength, until now she appears before us in full bloom, as one of the most striking of national phenomena. We have her treated by master hands. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes makes Elsie Venner into a philosophical study; he puts her through a process of accurate and careful analysis, favouring his readers with all the results, and giving us not only the colour of her hair and eyes, but also the component parts of her blood. Mr. Julian Hawthorne, following in the same path, subjects his characters to a scrutiny which, though there is little trace in it of what the great master calls "the modesty of nature," may be supposed to give us facts — facts which, however disagreeable, are, it is supposed, only supplied by such-like vivisection. In the elder Hawthorne, on the other hand, we have the heroine spiritualized, and supernaturalized into an etherealness of texture only equalled hitherto by Richter.

We can, too, see our heroine under various shades of attendant incident, from Indian adventure, to life in social communities, or in the Fifth Avenue Hotel; but in all circumstances and in all hands she carries with her an unmistakable nationality; whether she is described well or ill, whether she is treated of philosophically, religiously, or sentimentally, the heroine of American tales is a new being, and must be accepted as a new type of woman. Mr. Darwin must account for her as he can. She is no daughter of the old-fashioned Eve. Freitag's Lina speaks German, Victor Hugo's Minette has French manners; but they are still of the old type — we still recognize them as belonging to the race. But this American girl is an essentially new creation. It is not that she does not speak our tongue, that she is not graced with feminine attributes, that she is not gifted with beauty, golden hair, small feet and a bewitching smile, attributes which are happily common to heroines of all countries; but as one reads

of her sayings and doings, we feel that this creature is no longer of us. She is not bone of our bone; she has passed from among us; she has emigrated to new spheres; and we examine her with wonder and admiration mixed with some little amusement. She is possibly the representative of a future era in fiction, and we are perhaps destined to see the day when we shall meet her in the pages of English novels. She must therefore be an instructive study.

Where can we find her best? In the elder Hawthorne we are cut off from noticing some of his finest figures—notably, Hester Prynne and Hepzibah of the "House of the Seven Gables," as they belong to a period so early in American history as to place them perhaps more in the midst of American than English ideas and associations. Priscilla and Hilda of the "Blithedale Romance" and "Transformation," belong to New England of to-day. In them, Desdemona-like in their pensive delicacy, the purity and sweetness of the Roman lady is scarcely lessened under the discipline of Puritan manners; her grace and beauty scarcely dimmed as the silk and jewels are changed for the Puritan cap and kerchief. About these exquisite forms, Hawthorne has, however, thrown his visionary atmosphere, under which they seem to contract and expand, ghostlike, into greater or less clearness, an atmosphere which carries them out of the range of criticism. Priscilla's hand melts in ours as we try to draw her nearer for inspection; and Hilda and her doves dissolve into a Fra Angelico's Madonna, which in the whimsicalness of a dream we seem to have conjured into the form of a New England girl. On the other hand, Mr. Bret Harte objects so thoroughly to any respectable people, either men or women, that we may be pardoned if we do not choose a heroine from his pages at all for our special examination. His notion that the heroic virtues are chiefly to be found in the very worst company—the whitest lilies only blooming in the darkest and dirtiest of pools—is possibly correct. But we still hope that it is scarcely just to his countrywomen to take Miggles or M'Iss as flowers of the purest national growth; and while by no means denying the power of his sketches, we think it will be fairer to take Mrs. Stowe's or Miss Alcott's young ladies as being more genuine pictures of the American heroine.

About Miss Alcott's Joes and Dolly Wards there is certainly no vagueness, no philosophizing. We have in the "Old-

fashioned Girl" and "Little Women" the American girl of ordinary life at her best, and very pleasingly portrayed. Miss Alcott has the advantage of not having any physiological theories to discuss or psychological difficulties to solve, and she is quite content to lay before us clear unambitious sketches—giving us, with homely truthfulness and vivacity in fiction, what Mr. Eastburn Johnstone does in painting. Her characters are not heroic, but, unlike those of some other American novelists, they do not smack of the laboratory, the necromancer's study, or the dissecting-room. Her "girl" steps on the stage and begins her career amazingly early of course. One of her "little women" is a fascinating person before she is fifteen. She has begun life, wears long dresses, looks after the morals of her boy acquaintances, and takes a foremost place in the drama of life, when her European contemporary is leading a humdrum life in the schoolroom, and knows herself to be a person of no moment to any one beyond her parents and governess.

But it is not as a child that the American young lady almost before her teens is interesting, not as a mere passive recipient of impressions, but as an active and influential personage, that her sayings and doings are recorded. Life has begun for her. She has her part to play, her responsibility to meet, and her opinions to enunciate. She has already entered and is an actor on that world of emotion and excitement which begins some five or six years later with us: the world of romance that opens somewhere between childhood and the time when the serious work of life begins. This period of first youth—when the consciousness of individuality dawns, and the subtle influences of other people on ourselves and of ourselves on other people become apparent, and when, through friction with others, comes the knowledge of good and evil, both within and without—is the time chosen by all novelists and storytellers as giving them the openest field and the fullest materials wherewith to work. It is the time when the elements of character are fused, and are at their highest heat. The mind of childhood is like the gold in the crucible, unsullied but formless. The forces of life, like fire, are at work upon it, but we can scarcely do more than guess what its secret workings may be. When maturity is reached the time of change is over; the gold in its solid and firm shape goes forth to its passage in the world, and there is no further change for it but that of wear

and decay. But around the moment of transition—around that brief bright period of youth when the doors of life seem to open and the pure and splendid metal is poured forth to meet the world—to take we know not what form, to receive we know not what stamp—around this time there hangs a charm, just because it is so momentous and so brief. Youth is the time of bursting blossom and springing power. Love throws its light over it, and above it hangs the wavering shadow of uncertainty; for who shall say which way the new life will turn?

And into this flowery Eden, with its glory and beauty, its tempting Satan and its forbidden fruit, American writers agree to place their Eve almost in the years of childhood. English novels have children in them no doubt. Charlotte Brontë, Dickens, Mrs. Gaskell, have given us the childish experiences of their heroines; but it is as children and as children only that these young heroines are interesting. Their place is entirely understood. Their *raison d'être* is as charming creatures who are being moulded into shape, and under harsh or kindly treatment made into members of society. The first two or three chapters of an English novel may well be given, we think, to school and nursery days, if only to explain to us what the future Jane Eyre, Hester, or Maggie Tulliver is to be. The child here is understood to be merely mother to the woman, and it is only as a transitional being that she is brought before our notice.

But American novelists take an entirely different view. These "girls" of theirs—for the word has received a new meaning, and is a specific rather than a generic term—are interesting as active members of society. They do not strike us, as they have been sometimes described, as impudent, and usurpations of fictitious rights, and we entirely protest against that view being taken of their frankness and vivacity. We heartily enjoy their talk, their half-wise, half-foolish, wholly genuine reflections. They are exquisitely and *unconsciously* truthful. There is no effort about their honesty, it is as unaffected as their phraseology, with its "guesses" and abbreviations. They are audacious, but they are full of tact. The little girl standing on a doorstep vainly endeavouring to reach the bell-handle was no exceptional child. When an old gentleman—a minister among the Quakers—approached and mounted the steps to her relief, she turned, and at once acknowledged his kindness by saying, with grav-

ity and perfect readiness, "I am obliged to thee, friend Jones; I have frequently heard thee preach with pleasure." This was not impudence. The young Philadelphian showed, we think, not only a Bayard-like lack of fear, but a Bayard-like sense of courtesy in thus attempting to enter into the feelings of her aged friend and praising his "ministry." Such a child as this does not belong to the insensate condition of the *enfant terrible*; she is a civilized being among civilized beings, and is *en rapport* with mankind.

Miss Alcott's heroines are all of this kind—they are full of tact, readiness, and amiable audacity. Their self-assertion is not of the rebellious order, for their position is perfectly acknowledged. They seem very kind to their parents, though their relations with father and mother perhaps partake rather of goodfellowship than reverence. We hear of no family dissensions; fathers and their sons, mothers and their daughters, pull very evenly together, though one cannot deny that the daughters frequently row "stroke" in the family boat. There is a hearty and confidential feeling between Mrs. March and her daughters. "Send me as much advice as you like," writes Miss Amy to her mamma; "and I will take it," she frankly adds, "*if I can.*"

The "violet-like" bashfulness that hangs almost like a perfume upon the presence of Mrs. Gaskell's Mollies and Ruths these New England heroines have not; but they are wholesomely truthful, very sprightly, charmingly at their ease. They know how to be generous, but for any of that amiable hypocrisy with which Thackeray was so fond of charging his countrywomen, we look in vain. The most amiable and docile of the "March girls" has no more of this weakness than an English schoolboy, and withal they have none of the ugliness of self-consciousness and *mauvaise honte*; and if to our ears some of their phraseology is a little awkward, we must acknowledge that they themselves are not *gauche*. Their position is assured, and they make no painful efforts to please. Like the great Metternich, their manners are the same to prince or peasant. "They say I am not to speak to you unless you speak to me; is that so?" said the American belle when presented to the Prince Regent, finding that he was slow in beginning the conversation. And this is precisely the remark that Mrs. Stowe's Sally Ketteridge, or Miss Alcott's Jo or Amy March would have made, adding, had they seen good to

do so, any advice on his public or private duties to his plethoric Royal Highness that might have occurred to them.

The only instance of an anxiety to please in an American girl that we recall is in the case of Mr. Anthony Trollope's Ophelia Gledd. Mr. Trollope has, as we know, been everywhere, and doubtless draws Miss Pheely from life; but we are surprised to find the cool, audacious Boston belle, who patronizes everybody, show actual timidity when she has accepted an English lover, at the thought of meeting the "she baronet" among his relations. We should have been quite prepared to find Mr. Trollope express anxiety as to her reception in London, but certainly none on the part of Miss Pheely herself.

In fact, it seems, judging by what we find in most American novels, to be an acknowledged truth in America, that the young ladies are the best and most agreeable exponents of the virtues, and best guides to old and young; so that a sprightly heroine has, we find, much to do in the way of giving advice, and has opinions of her own about everything, which she is consistent in carrying into action, and about which she speaks freely. "I never dance with Tom," says one; "he is a non-union man." One says the empress of the French dresses in bad taste, or the English cathedral service is formal; another reads her male friends lectures on the evils of smoking and taking too many glasses of sherry. Any of Miss Alcott's sisterhood would have said what we once heard a pretty abolitionist say to a devoted Baltimorean who stood holding her fan, gloves, and bouquet at a ball. He had tested her principles somewhat roughly by saying, "But I suppose you would scarcely be ready to marry a black man, Miss —?" "As lief as one who would ask me the question," she answered, between the spoonfuls of ice she was eating.

In English tales the good advice and moral sentiments are left to the rector of the parish, or the earnest member of Parliament; or perhaps they are modestly given from the mouth of the author himself in the pauses of more exciting conversation; but all these good things are served up to us by the heroine herself in American tales. No doubt the author shows much shrewdness in making all the moralities proceed from the charming person with whom everybody is expected to fall in love; but while holding the very apparent truth that virtues unexplained have a much higher charm, we must admit that the sort of talk which abounds in

American novels to which we refer is much better than the sentimental inanities or sensationally horrible positions to which English heroines in all but novels of the higher class are condemned. American novelists have less incident at their disposal, and are forced to become more analytical and deductive.

And here we come to the explanation of one of the peculiarities of the American heroine. The security of her position and the conditions of society in which she lives are not romantic. Her very independence and freedom of action cut her off from those situations of trial and danger which have served to make the heroines of the Old World; and it is difficult to find for her, unless she has had the advantage — speaking in a literary sense — of being a black or quadroon, any of those misfortunes and trials by which her European contemporary is rendered charming. Where every one has elbow room and a vote, there are naturally fewer catastrophes, fewer trials for the heroic virtues; and society under these circumstances offers less material for the seeker after romance. It has been said that but for the miseries and misfortunes of mankind there would have been no history; and we may certainly add, that without the griefs and difficulties that fate throws in the way of individual men and women, the novelist would have little to say. The two greatest stories ever told have danger, war, and death as their theme, and the figures of Hector and Helen, Achilles and Penelope, move asserting their life and vigour through a troubled and stormy atmosphere. Tales written about a safer, more comfortable, and more monotonous state of society must naturally trust less to incident, and throw the interest more and more into the analysis of character and emotion. Since the days of Scott and Goldsmith our tales have been growing more introspective; and in America, where the acme of individual well-being and freedom has been reached, it is perhaps not wonderful that the novelist is driven further and further on this course, and that some American writers have pushed on the process of physiological dissection in a way that renders their work both preposterous and disgusting. But there is happily another class of novelists in America to whom a healthier instinct has forbidden this cause, and for them there is another path open. They candidly take the common incidents of every-day life, steeped in what local atmosphere they can get, and let the characters of their stories develop them-

selves and talk themselves clear. The pictures of New England life in Mrs. Stowe's "Pearl of Orr's Island," are vivid and charming; the heroines of Miss Alcott's novels talk extremely well. If they have not the charm which comes from the romantic interest of many misfortunes, they have plenty of opinions on all subjects. If the heroine of an English, French, or German novel usually charms us by reason of her sweetness, fortitude, and gentleness, she herself remaining almost a passive instrument in the hands of fate, the American heroine, with her graces and powers, is an active agent, and amid circumstances over which—if we except the weather and some of the natural laws—she has always perfect control.

Why should we be surprised by the contrast? The European heroine has close-hedging disabilities on all sides, which we have, somehow, come to regard as, if not forming one of her charms, at least tending to develop qualities which are charming. The harsh relatives, the all-powerful parents and guardians, the family feuds, the difficulties about property, the distinctions of class—all these are shades in the picture which serve to throw out the principal figure into fuller light. The dangers that beset her invite the display of manly loyalty and devotion; and if difficulties hedge her path, or chain her, Andromeda-like, to a rock, the charm of her patience and courage are almost sufficient to disarm the malignity of the monster himself; and it is the novelist's duty to see that Perseus arrives in the third volume. The American heroine has to make her way without any of these attractive but painful disasters. Where property passes readily from hand to hand, and no one is hopelessly cast down at the loss of a fortune, difficulties about property are rare, and family quarrels scarcely known. She has no harsh relatives, and if such a thing as a cruel step-mother were possible in America, it would be absurd to represent Cinderella crying disconsolately over the hearth, when as a matter of fact we know that she might easily pack her trunk and go and "teach school," or "travel west," where half-a-dozen young emigrants are ready to marry her, or a place in a telegraph-office is awaiting her acceptance. There are, as we know, no wicked earls in America to persecute lovely governesses with their attentions, no dreadful duchesses to interfere with the happiness of young persons, not

even a blustering squire to swear at his daughter and hinder her perfectly justifiable union with the excellent young curate. From all these painful but interesting casualties the American heroine is cut off. If Romeo falls in love with Juliet in Boston or New York, stolen interviews and a ladder of ropes would be absurdities, when he has only to call on her and candidly and decorously avow his feelings in her own private "parlour." Juliet under these circumstances is doubtless happier than if she lived in Verona, but as a heroine of romance we must admit she is less interesting. American novelists have to play their game according to their board and with new rules. Their queen-piece has perhaps a wider range and more moves, and is in truth as active as a bishop or knight, but she no longer seems to hold the place of central interest, and the security of her position is not so momentous to the game.

As the American novelist has not much to offer his heroine in the way of romance in her career, she is somewhat thrown on her own resources, and we must own she supports herself very cleverly. It requires uncommonly good conversational powers to keep one's self going through three volumes; but some of these young Americans do it well to the last page. Mrs. Stowe's and Miss Alcott's girls are always sprightly; they are, in fact, far cleverer than their male friends. They are neither pert, nor fast, nor unfeminine, but they take the lead. The female voices in the chorus chant the melody, the basses and tenors fill in the parts. Let us give them all due praise. These young women are true-hearted, high-minded, and pure—with a purity which perhaps strikes one as belonging more to dignity and self-respect of character than that which is allied to depth and passion of nature. If they have faults, they are the faults of sensible people. They feel that their tact and truthfulness, their shrewdness and good sense, are a mainstay to society, and society is in their hands. A sentence from one of these New England stories throws a curious light on the changed position given by American novelists to the members of a family:—

"To outsiders, the five energetic women seemed to rule the house, and so they did in many things; but the quiet man sitting among his books was still the head of the family, the household conscience, anchor, and comforter; for to him the busy, anxious women always turned in troublous

times, finding him, in the truest sense of those sacred words, husband and father."*

We have read a description such as this in some English tales, but in this case it was the father and sons who were "busy" and "anxious," and it was the "quiet" mother who was described as the "anchor" and "comforter."

Character is shown and developed under all emotions, but love has its own especially testing powers; and if, as is said, love transforms the heart, it much more reveals it. Under this crucial test of love we may therefore expect to find the deeper parts of our heroine's nature disclosed. But here, as everywhere, she is gracefully self-contained, and is never carried beyond herself and the moment. It would be generally admitted, we imagine, that the interest of a love-story, like a well-conceived melody, should flow on, rising higher and fuller as the passion strengthens, the disclosure of the two hearts like the ever-expected but exquisite closing chords of the melody ending the history. The love-story in American novels is usually original and charmingly told, but there is something wanting. The air is sprightly and sweet, but the harmony seems to lack force. The love-scene is often graceful, natural, and ingenious, but wanting in that ring and depth of tone that stirs the imagination with a sense of wonder and delight, as if the gates of Eden had momentarily opened, and some of the light had fallen upon us as we read. There is less of disclosure, less of contrast, in the two natures that meet; less ecstasy and effulgence in the surprise and joy. In them the pathos is not so striking as the cleverness of the questions and replies.

In the story of "Bressant" there are, we must admit, situations conceived which promise the display of overpowering emotion; but is the promise kept? We think not. Cornelia Valyon is represented as a beautiful woman, carried into treachery and humiliation by a passionate love. There are pages taken up with descriptions of her nature and her feelings; but, after all, physiological scrutiny is not dramatic power, and Mr. Hawthorne's painstaking and unscrupulous inquiries end in making more vague a character that in the first few chapters was vivid and life-like. Possibly the explanation lies in the fact that *reserve*, that subtle element in all passion, is not here, and that the most accurate dissection of

emotion is but a confession of impotence to conceive it in living form.

It is not our place here to enter into any discussion of the deeper question underlying the simple one before us. It is with the novelist alone that we have to do. We would only seek to compare the qualities of what we may roughly take to be the ideal woman of American fiction with those of the heroine of the Old World. That American novelists have discarded the old artistic place of the heroine as the passive, though perhaps central figure, in the drama, and placed her in the rank of active agents in the scene, is plain; that in their view her highest charm is no longer in her "eyes of meek surrender" and "her constraining grace of rest," but rather in her playful and shrewd supremacy over society. If, in their hands, she has lost some of the pensive charms of the Juliets, Desdemonas, and Violets, we must admit that she has gained by freedom the virtue of freedom — truthfulness. If, in the greater ease and security of the society in which she is placed, she seem to have lost somewhat in passion and tenderness, she has at any rate preserved the graces of uprightness and courage in their full beauty. This we must, however, venture to think — in removing her from the old position as the passive centre of the tale, the American novelists have lost for their heroine something of that more subtle and hidden power which the poets and writers of the Old World have ascribed to her. The earliest story of human life has perhaps been the type for others; and the first initial act of Eve, while it forever laid upon her the doom of a secondary place in the active world, endued her forever in men's minds as having a subtle and close connection with the invisible powers of good and evil. Dimly or clearly this great instinct has been reflected in all literature; nobly or basely it has found expression in legend, poem, and popular superstition, declaring itself under the shapes of prophetess, sibyl, or the vulgarer form of witch. It finds its last echo perhaps in the position assigned to the heroine in the modern European novel — a position of very limited action, but one of subtle and spiritual influence.

Our own poets all lend their precedents to this idea. Shakespeare asserts it in almost every play, giving the world of action to men, but making the moral catastrophe and interest centre and hang upon the fidelity, love, or virtue of a woman. Spenser taught it not more strongly, but

* Little Women Wedded.

more directly; the active interest of his stories always being in the fights and adventures of the Red-Cross Knight, Sir Scudamore, or Prince Arthur; while the hidden and fatal powers are laid in the hands of Britomart, Una, and Duessa. And Milton, with the voice of Adam, even under the rebuke of an archangel, asserts it again:—

For well I understand,

In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given
O'er other creatures.

Yet . . .

Wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanced, and like folly shows;
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic placed.

It seems to lie now with the American writers to show whether this is all a dream and a fallacy. AGNES MACDONELL.

From The Liberal Review.
CLEVER PEOPLE.

Is it a good thing to be clever? One would think not, judging by the manner in which many talented people are treated. In point of fact, the usage to which these are sometimes subjected is of such a character that they may readily be excused if they occasionally devoutly wish that they were stupid. Their less brilliant neighbours are continually trying to pick holes in their coats, with the view of showing the world that they are not deserving of such high praise as the world seems disposed to award them. Critics who will graciously permit persons of a commonplace character to escape the lash of censure, pounce upon a man who is popularly supposed to be above the average in point of intellectual attainments and savagely flagellate him to the extent of their power. At one time they endeavour to prove that he is a rank impostor; at another time they hint that he is a dangerous character, who is doing more harm than good in the world; and, in exceptional cases, when he outrages their selfish prejudices, they go so far as to cast a doubt upon his sanity. The individual who has made a fortune by grinding the life out of his employes and constantly getting the better of those

who have had business transactions with him, will inform you, with unctuous self-satisfaction, that certain clever people are lacking in the most important of all things, viz., common sense. The person who never reads anything but the most unwholesome columns of a daily newspaper, will sneer at the productions of master minds and declare that the same are mischievous rubbish. And so it is with a large portion of mankind. Unless a man has the talent of amassing money—even though he possesses ten others which are of a higher and purer character—even though he has painted pictures, written books, made scientific investigations, and formulated systems of philosophy which represent more actual brain-work and integrity of purpose than a hundred fortunes—society deems itself at liberty to make light of him and to sneer at him if it feels disposed to do so. When it does condescend to recognize his claims, it often does so in a manner which may well inspire him with the most profound disgust. In nine cases out of ten, people exalt him—when they do so—because they wish to be exalted themselves. They would like it to be understood that they are on terms of intimacy with this man of genius, and that they have been graciously pleased to patronize that other person of talent. No doubt, indeed, there are enterprising beings who would keep a recognized man of talent about their premises, just as they keep prize cattle, if the expenditure of money would enable them to do so. At the same time nine-tenths of those who sound the praises of their clever friends—or, rather, those whom they are pleased to say are their friends—are very careful to point out that the said friends are peculiar, and eccentric, and so on, as if the “strange creatures” could do the work which they are doing, if they were continually pausing in their labours to see that they were not outraging any of the laws to which the plutocracy pay a slavish deference. Then when a man of ability comes to grief, there is a wagging of heads and a time of rejoicing. Stupid people gloat over the fact that he has not been able to look after himself better than they have been able to look after themselves; and the chances are that they begin to think themselves quite clever upon the score of his solitary failure in a matter which is, in their eyes, of paramount importance, but to which he has devoted little attention.

Clever people, in addition to being as a class disliked, are feared. Very few

ordinary persons are at their ease when talking to them; and a great many consider that the less intercourse they hold with them the better will it be for their peace of mind. Often they fancy that the stupendous beings cannot take an interest in the matters which most delight ordinary natures. In all this they are very foolish. A weak mind is always benefited when it comes in contact with a strong mind; and it will be found that in numerous cases those who possess the most powerful intellects possess the gentleness and, in many respects, the simplicity of children. Of course, there are so-called clever people who will not condescend to consort with those who are assumed to be humbler mentally than themselves and make a point of snubbing those who will consent to be snubbed by them; but it will be found that these haughty tyrants are, in a general way, impostors and that their arrogant assumption of superiority to most of those with whom they are brought in contact is as unjustifiable as it is abominable. It will be well if those who are now crushed by the position and reputed knowledge of these bullies will take heart, in the event of their doing which it may happen that they will find that their adversaries are—in spite of their store of technical knowledge—as incapable of original thought as they are of consideration for the feelings of others. Unfortunately, many people are not only afraid to have much to do with clever people in their individual capacities, but they look with the most profound suspicion upon much that clever people do. As a great number of clever people are constantly making important discoveries, as they are in the habit of promulgating what appear novel

ideas, and as they fail to subscribe to that comfortable doctrine that all that is is for the best and therefore do not argue that every modern institution, whether it be good or bad, should be preserved simply because it is an institution, this is not surprising. But it is to the last degree absurd that men should greet with howls of execration views of things which do not coincide with their notions and appear calculated to revolutionize a great deal of what they are accustomed to. The spirit which led to the persecution of Galileo and impeded the work of George Stephenson is as active as ever, in spite of the fact that experience tells us that the hated theory of to-day becomes the golden rule of to-morrow. Thus it happens that clever people frequently fail to reap the reward of their labours, unless they can be said to be rewarded when, after their bodies have crumbled into dust, statues are erected to their memories and other honours paid them. They scatter the seed while the winter's blast blows about their heads; others reap the harvest in the warm summer's sunshine. Every new idea has to receive a certain amount of abuse ere the popular mind becomes accustomed to it and it is carried into effect. Those who carry it into effect are lucky persons, who secure public approbation upon the strength of what other people have done. At the present time, there are men who are battling with popular prejudice which in the end will be defeated. But those who are waging the war will not gain the prize, which will fall to the lot of those who are now busily engaged in endeavouring to repel the assaults of the warriors.

16,000 MILES OF APPLE-TREES. — We are not such great growers of fruit as we might be, and as we really ought to be, considering the health-giving properties belonging to this branch of the vegetable kingdom. One who has the welfare of the human race at heart, has lately cast eyes on our neglected railway sidings, and it has occurred to him that they might be utilized by the growing of apple-trees. This is largely done in Belgium and Holland. Anywhere between Maestricht and Mechlin, for instance, you may see the espaliers kept low and neatly trained on wires. "Ask

the station-master," says our philanthropist, "if the fruit ever gets stolen. He'll smile and say, 'Some does, perhaps; but there's enough left to pay the orchard company a good dividend.'" Surely we, too, might have limited liability railroad-orchard companies. There are, by the statistical tables of 1873, over sixteen thousand miles of railways in the United Kingdom, and any one caring for such questions may set to work to calculate how many trees could be grown, and how many apples there would probably be, in a good season, for each of us.

Cassell's Magazine.